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WITCHBLADE®

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DIGITAL EDITION
US

TOP COW UNIVERSE

WITCHBLADE®

created by **Marc Silvestri**, **David Wohl**, **Brian Haberlin** & **Michael Turner**

New York City Police Detective Sara Pezzini's life was forever fractured by her father's murder. Cold, cunning, and hellbent on revenge, Sara now stalks a vicious criminal cabal beneath the city. During a brutal warehouse massacre, Sara bonded with the Witchblade, an ancient weapon that transformed her into something wild, magnificent, and beyond her darkest imaginings.

Previously...Sara's search into the cover-up that destroyed her father and the supernatural forces surrounding her have led to billionaire Kenneth Irons. Irons has money, power, and associates from the darkest corners of the underworld. In an epic confrontation, Irons transported Sara to a hidden arena where she was thrust into a life-or-death struggle against criminals, killers, and beings with abilities outside the natural world. With the help of the mysterious warrior, Ian Nottingham, Sara escaped and was lying low. When Sara jumped back into her police work, Captain Joe Siry shared that he was set to meet with an informant in the Franchetti crime family. Sara jumped into action and intercepted the family's assassin, Jackie Estacado, leaving the scene. Sara can sense the supernatural forces around him, but neither he nor anyone else can see his true nature except for Sara. Following their epic clash, Jackie gives Sara a lead on who is behind the human trafficking operation that brought Sara into the world of the supernatural, and her world will never be the same.

"Me and My Chauffeur Blues"

Written by **Marguerite Bennett**
Line art by **Giuseppe Cafaro**
Colors by **Arif Prianto**
Letters by **Troy Peteri**
Edits by **Marc Silvestri**, **Matt Hawkins** and **Ryan Cady**

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Cover B: **Tula Lotay**
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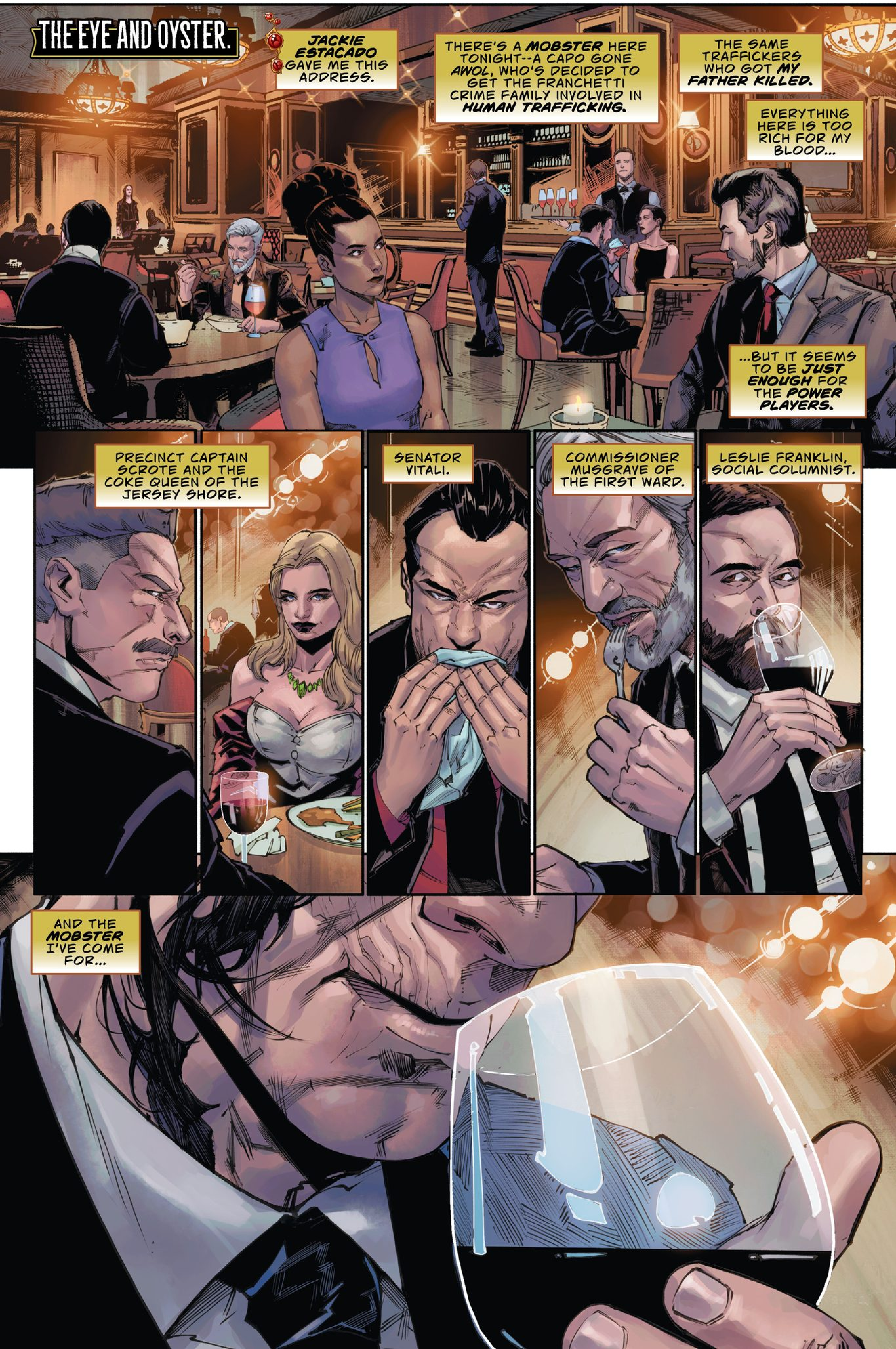
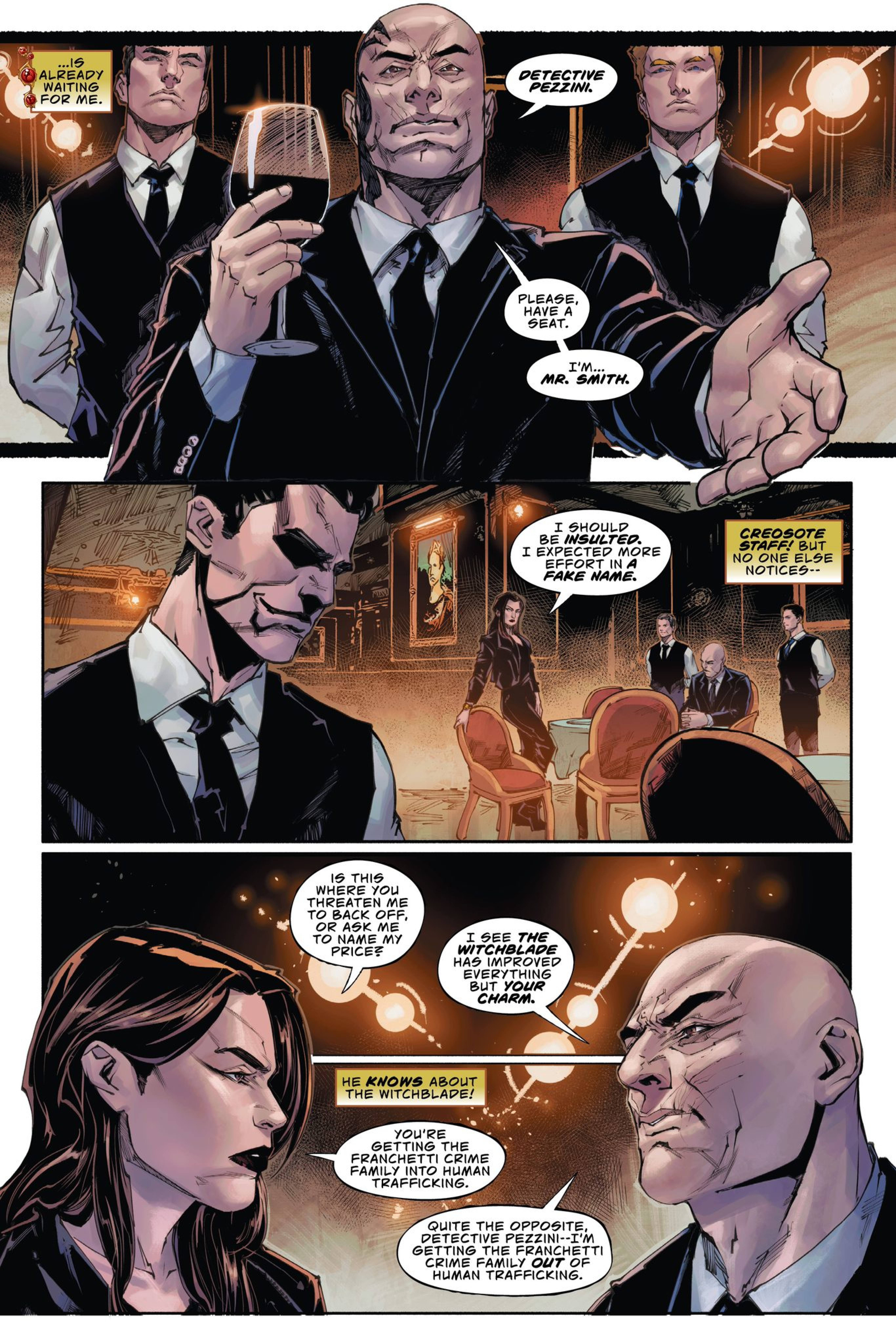
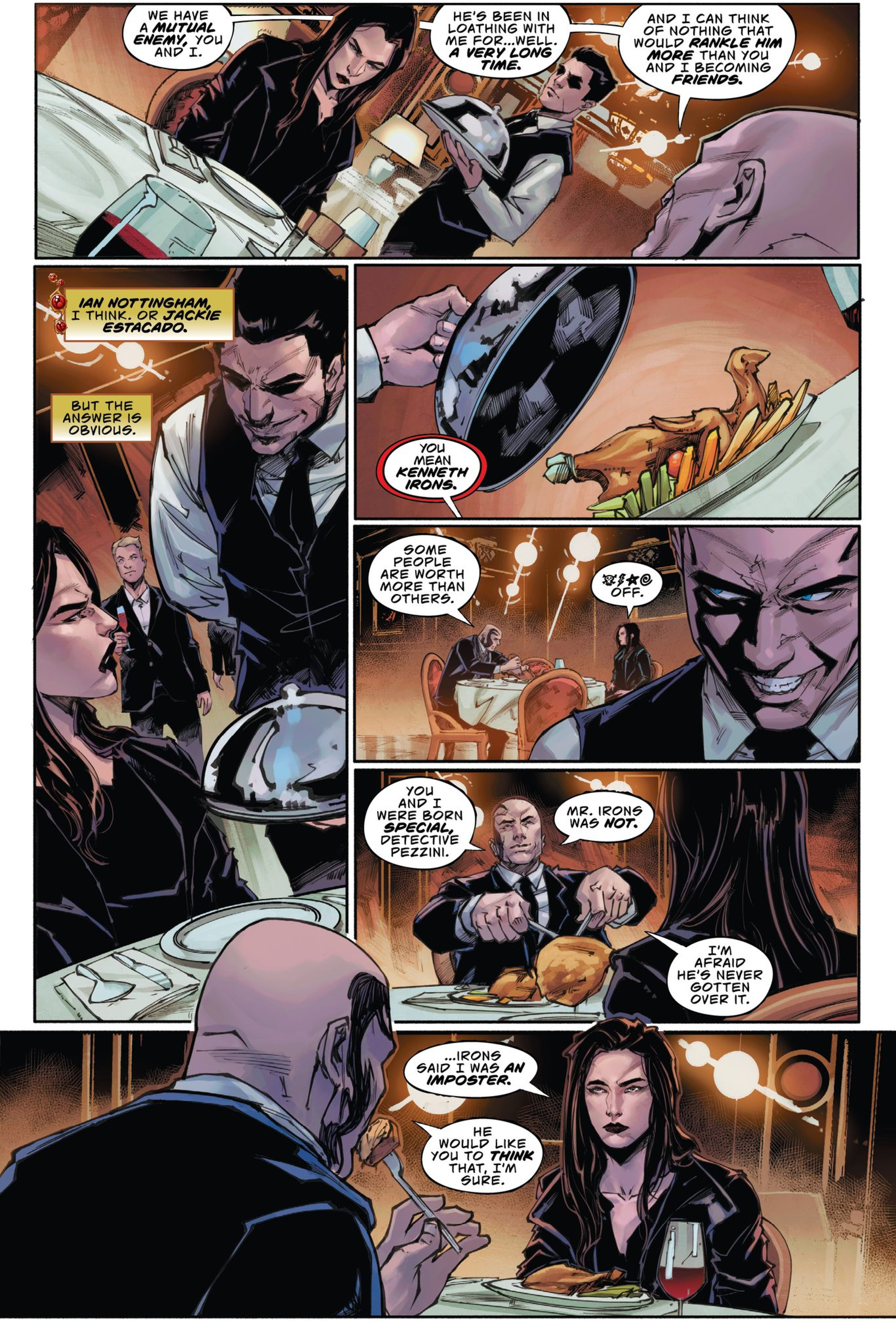
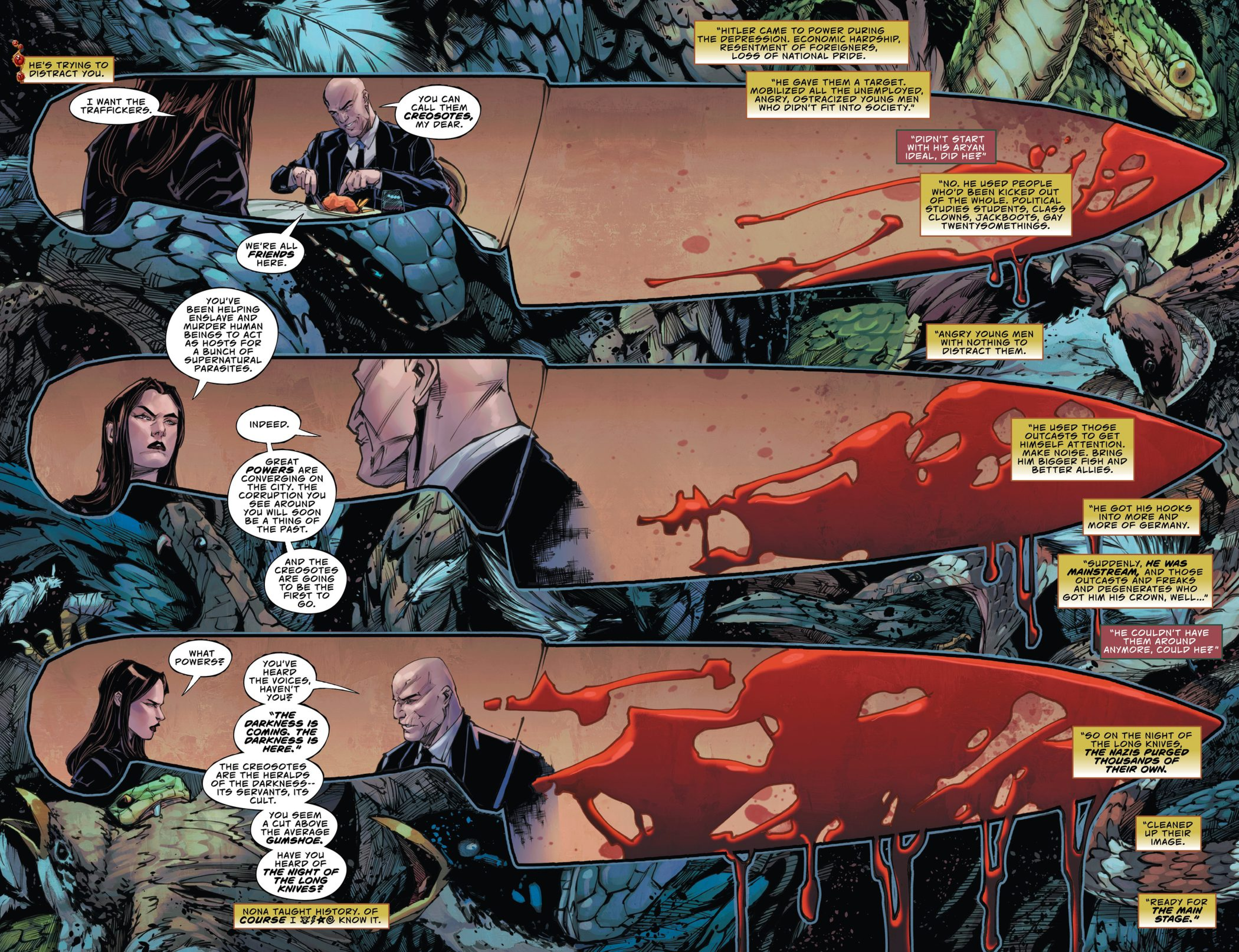
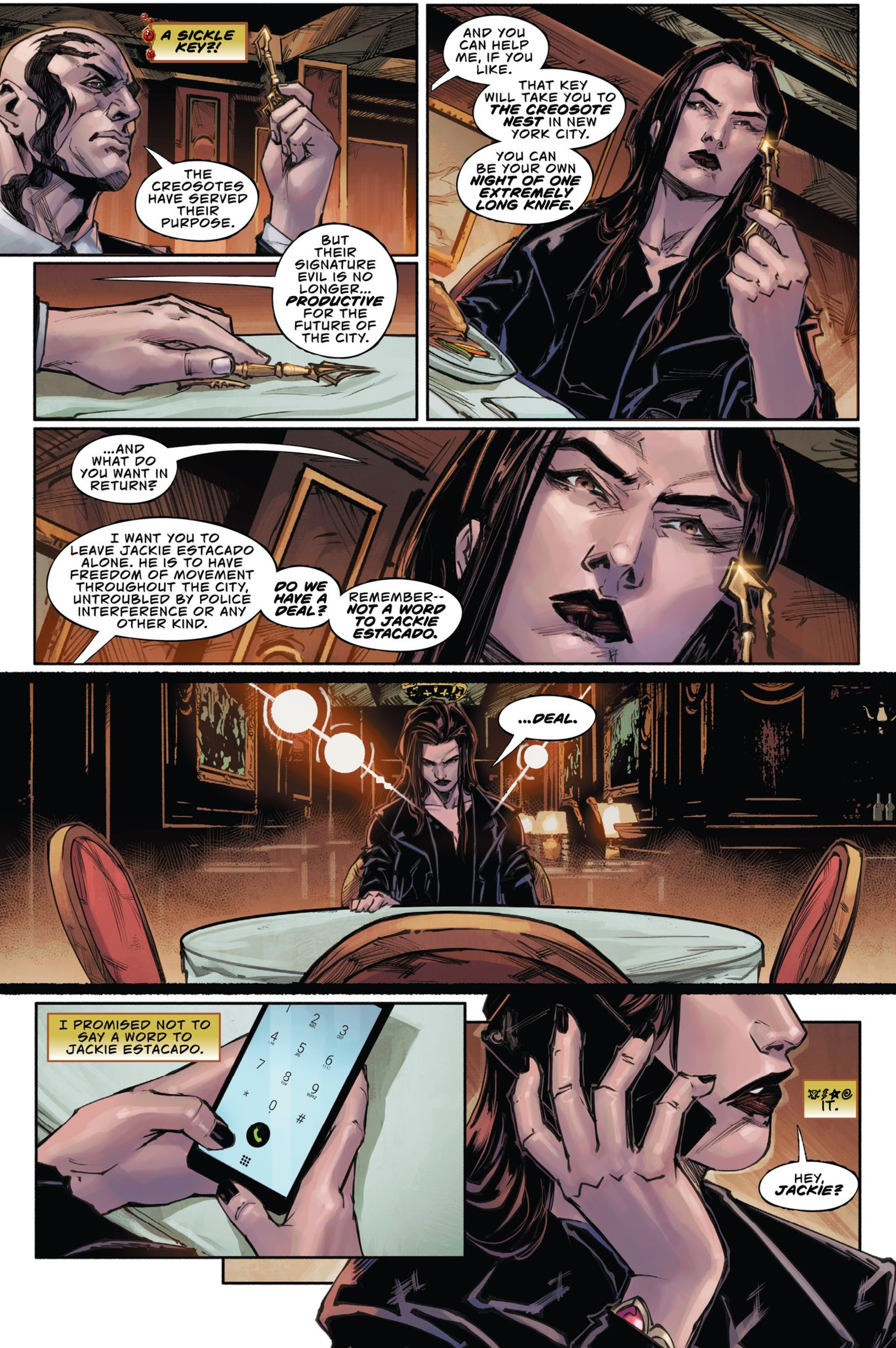
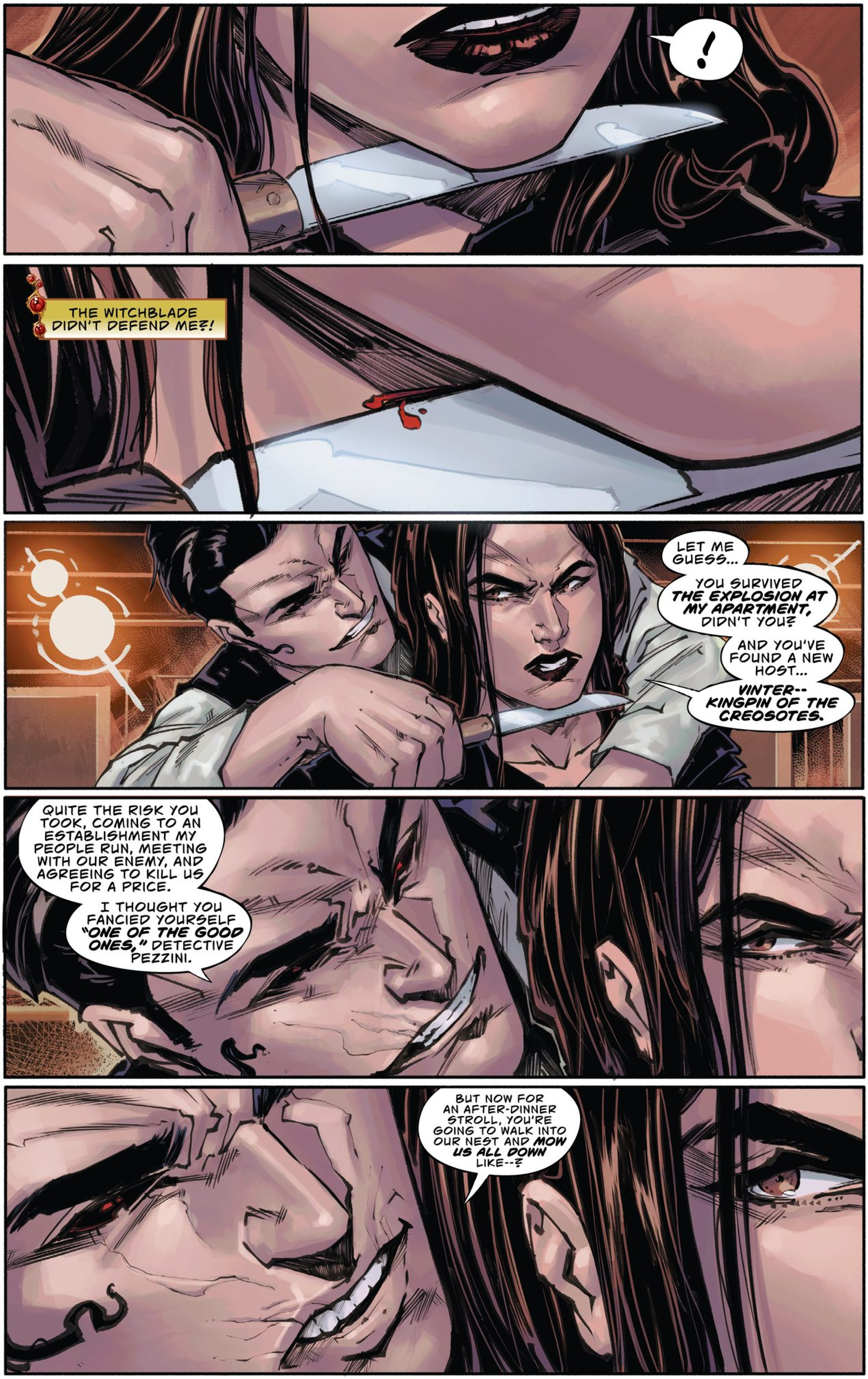

THE EYE AND OYSTER.
JACKIE ESTACADO GAVE ME THIS ADDRESS.
THERE'S A MOBSTER HERE TONIGHT--A CAPO GONE AWOL, WHO'S DECIDED TO GET THE FRANCHETTI CRIME FAMILY INVOLVED IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING.
THE SAME TRAFFICKERS WHO GOT MY FATHER KILLED.
EVERYTHING HERE IS TOO RICH FOR MY BLOOD...
...BUT IT SEEMS TO BE JUST ENOUGH FOR THE POWER PLAYERS.
PRECINCT CAPTAIN SCROTE AND THE COKE QUEEN OF THE JERSEY SHORE.
SENATOR VITALI.
COMMISSIONER MUSGRAVE OF THE FIRST WARD.
LESLIE FRANKLIN, SOCIAL COLUMNIST.
AND THE MOBSTER I'VE COME FOR...

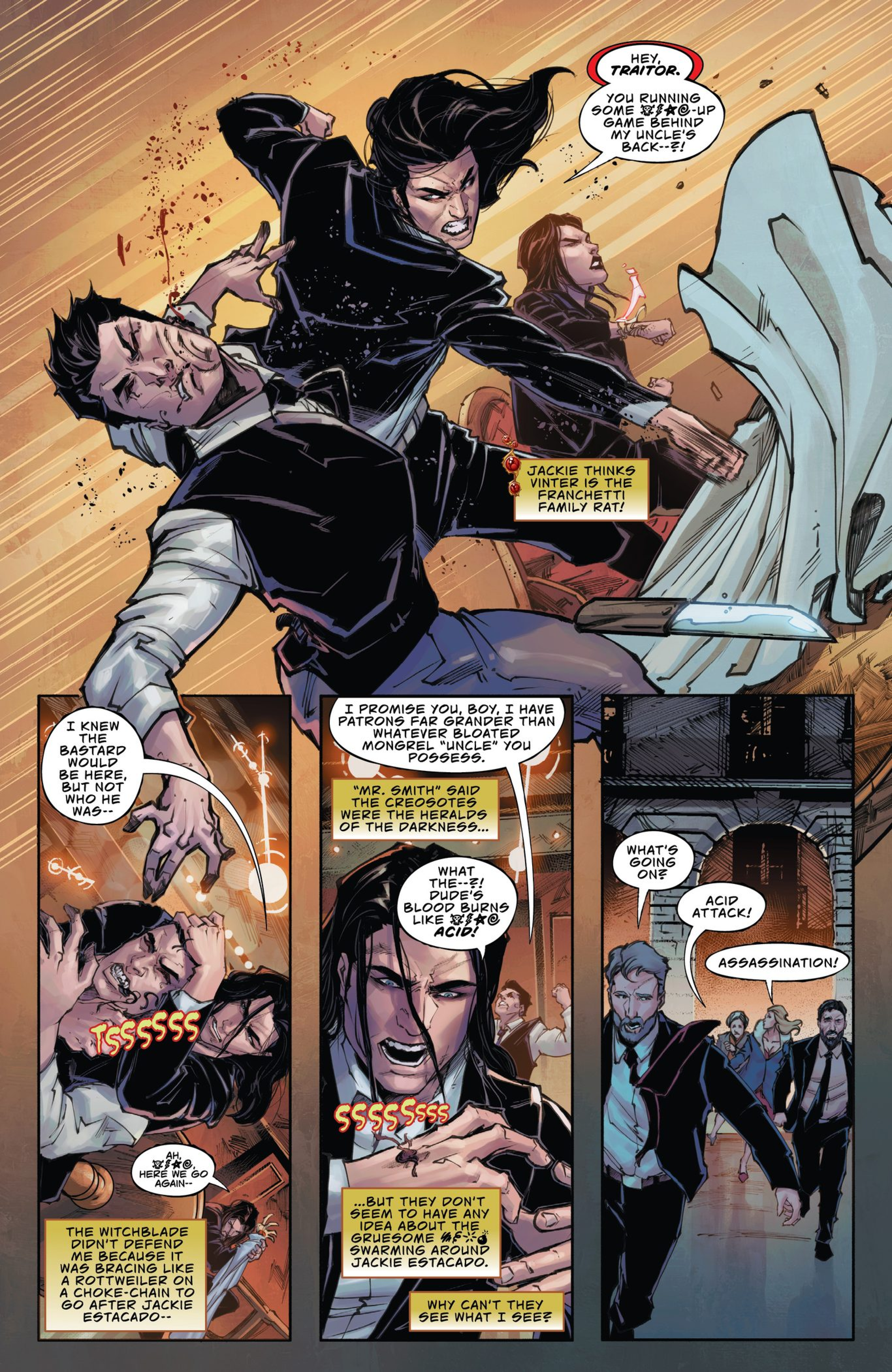

...IS ALREADY WAITING FOR ME.
DETECTIVE PEZZINI.
PLEASE, HAVE A SEAT.
I'M... MR. SMITH.
I SHOULD BE INSULTED. I EXPECTED MORE EFFORT IN A FAKE NAME.
CREOSOTE STAFF! BUT NO ONE ELSE NOTICES--
IS THIS WHERE YOU THREATEN ME TO BACK OFF, OR ASK ME TO NAME MY PRICE?
I SEE THE WITCHBLADE HAS IMPROVED EVERYTHING BUT YOUR CHARM.
HE KNOWS ABOUT THE WITCHBLADE!
YOU'RE GETTING THE FRANCHETTI CRIME FAMILY INTO HUMAN TRAFFICKING.
QUITE THE OPPOSITE, DETECTIVE PEZZINI--I'M GETTING THE FRANCHETTI CRIME FAMILY OUT OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

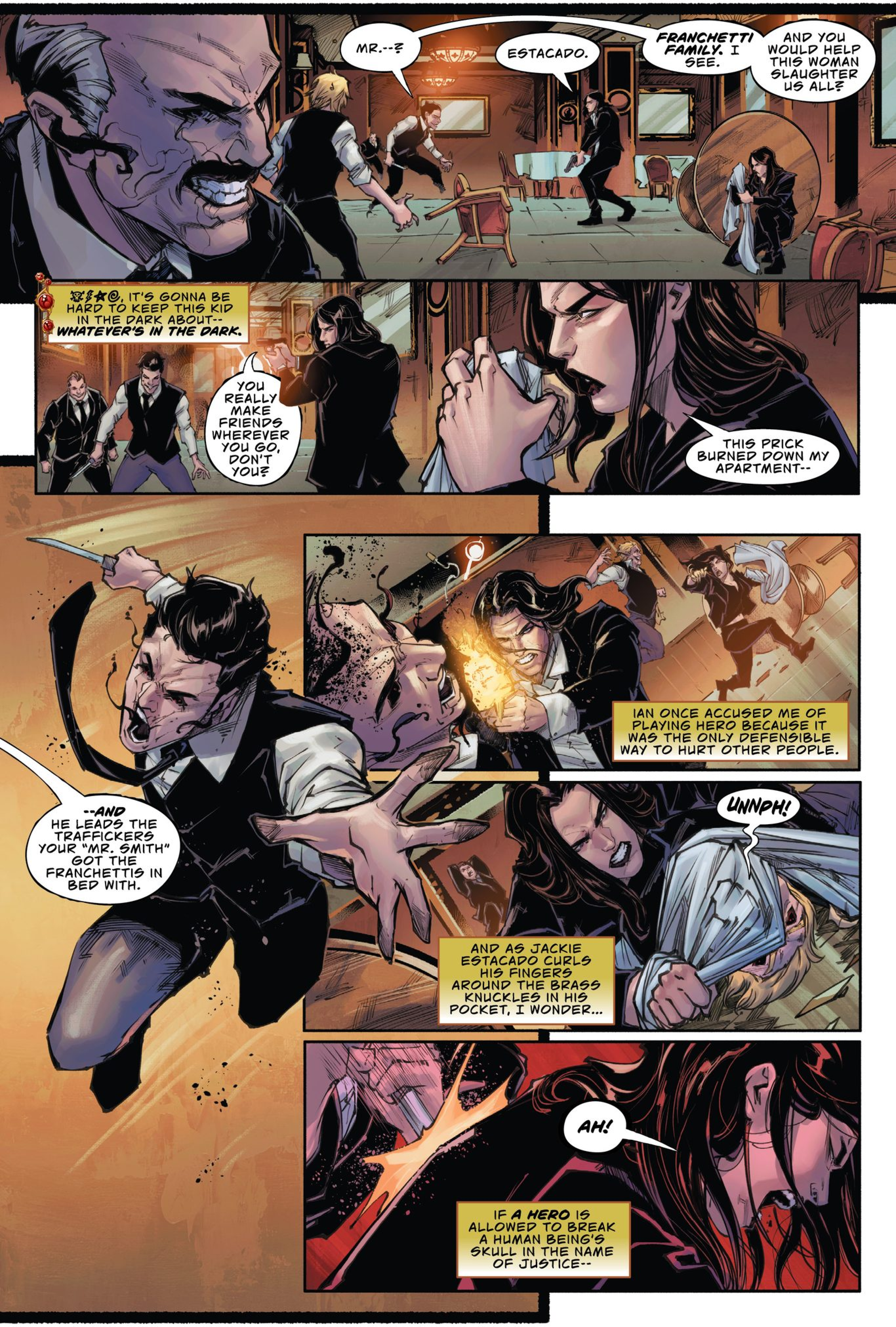

WE HAVE A **MUTUAL ENEMY,** YOU AND I.
HE'S BEEN IN LOATHING WITH ME FOR...WELL. **A VERY LONG TIME.**
AND I CAN THINK OF NOTHING THAT WOULD **RANKLE HIM MORE** THAN YOU AND I BECOMING **FRIENDS.**
IAN NOTTINGHAM, I THINK. OR ***JACKIE ESTACADO.***
BUT THE ANSWER IS OBVIOUS.
YOU MEAN ***KENNETH IRONS.***
SOME PEOPLE ARE WORTH MORE THAN OTHERS.
☠⚡★@ OFF.
YOU AND I WERE BORN ***SPECIAL,*** DETECTIVE PEZZINI.
MR. IRONS WAS ***NOT.***
I'M AFRAID HE'S NEVER GOTTEN OVER IT.
...IRONS SAID I WAS ***AN IMPOSTER.***
HE WOULD LIKE YOU TO ***THINK*** THAT, I'M SURE.

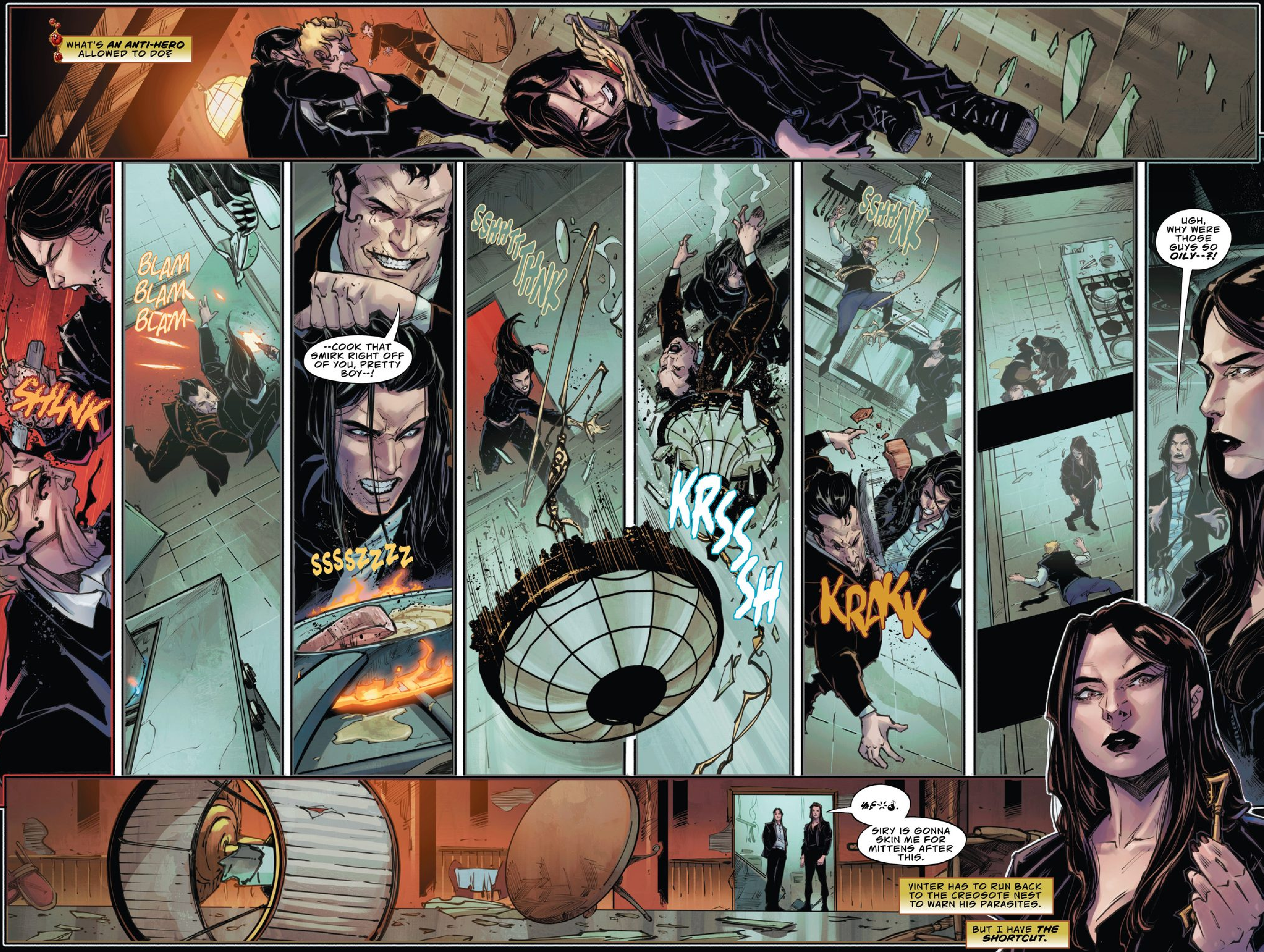

HE'S TRYING TO DISTRACT YOU.
I WANT THE TRAFFICKERS.
YOU CAN CALL THEM CREOSOTES, MY DEAR.
WE'RE ALL FRIENDS HERE.
"HITLER CAME TO POWER DURING THE DEPRESSION. ECONOMIC HARDSHIP, RESENTMENT OF FOREIGNERS, LOSS OF NATIONAL PRIDE.
"HE GAVE THEM A TARGET. MOBILIZED ALL THE UNEMPLOYED, ANGRY, OSTRACIZED YOUNG MEN WHO DIDN'T FIT INTO SOCIETY."
"DIDN'T START WITH HIS ARYAN IDEAL, DID HE?"
"NO. HE USED PEOPLE WHO'D BEEN KICKED OUT OF THE WHOLE. POLITICAL STUDIES STUDENTS, CLASS CLOWNS, JACKBOOTS, GAY TWENTYSOMETHINGS.
YOU'VE BEEN HELPING ENSLAVE AND MURDER HUMAN BEINGS TO ACT AS HOSTS FOR A BUNCH OF SUPERNATURAL PARASITES.
INDEED.
GREAT POWERS ARE CONVERGING ON THE CITY. THE CORRUPTION YOU SEE AROUND YOU WILL SOON BE A THING OF THE PAST.
AND THE CREOSOTES ARE GOING TO BE THE FIRST TO GO.
"ANGRY YOUNG MEN WITH NOTHING TO DISTRACT THEM.
"HE USED THOSE OUTCASTS TO GET HIMSELF ATTENTION. MAKE NOISE. BRING HIM BIGGER FISH AND BETTER ALLIES.
"HE GOT HIS HOOKS INTO MORE AND MORE OF GERMANY.
"SUDDENLY, HE WAS MAINSTREAM, AND THOSE OUTCASTS AND FREAKS AND DEGENERATES WHO GOT HIM HIS CROWN, WELL..."
"HE COULDN'T HAVE THEM AROUND ANYMORE, COULD HE?"
WHAT POWERS?
YOU'VE HEARD THE VOICES, HAVEN'T YOU?
"THE DARKNESS IS COMING. THE DARKNESS IS HERE."
THE CREOSOTES ARE THE HERALDS OF THE DARKNESS-- ITS SERVANTS, ITS CULT.
YOU SEEM A CUT ABOVE THE AVERAGE GUMSHOE.
HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE NIGHT OF THE LONG KNIVES?
NONA TAUGHT HISTORY. OF COURSE I #$★@ KNOW IT.
"SO ON THE NIGHT OF THE LONG KNIVES, THE NAZIS PURGED THOUSANDS OF THEIR OWN.
"CLEANED UP THEIR IMAGE.
"READY FOR THE MAIN STAGE."

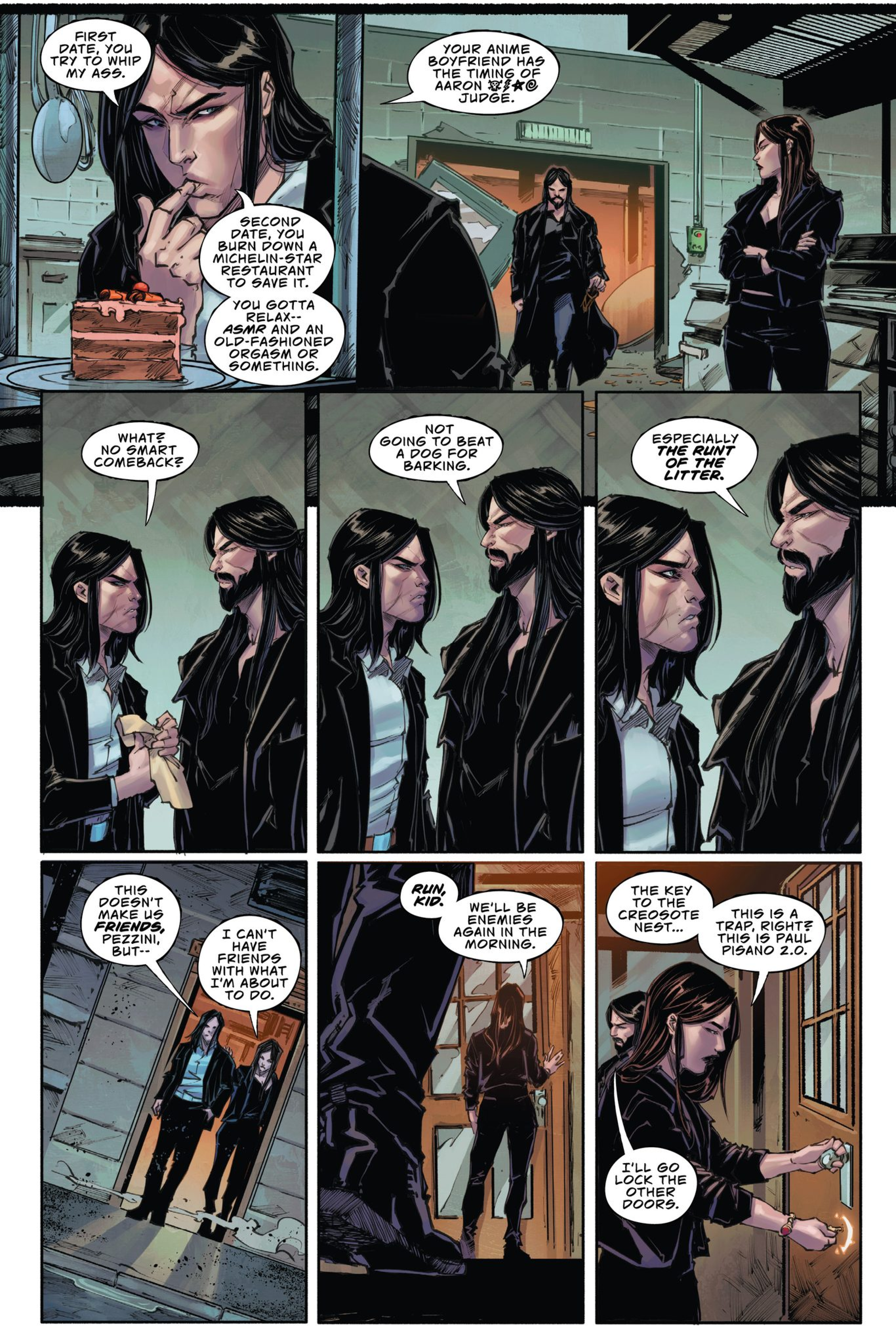

A SICKLE KEY?!
THE CREOSOTES HAVE SERVED THEIR PURPOSE.
BUT THEIR SIGNATURE EVIL IS NO LONGER... **PRODUCTIVE** FOR THE FUTURE OF THE CITY.
AND YOU CAN HELP ME, IF YOU LIKE.
THAT KEY WILL TAKE YOU TO **THE CREOSOTE NEST** IN NEW YORK CITY.
YOU CAN BE YOUR OWN **NIGHT OF ONE EXTREMELY LONG KNIFE.**
...AND WHAT DO YOU WANT IN RETURN?
I WANT YOU TO LEAVE JACKIE ESTACADO ALONE. HE IS TO HAVE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT THROUGHOUT THE CITY, UNTROUBLED BY POLICE INTERFERENCE OR ANY OTHER KIND.
DO WE HAVE A DEAL?
REMEMBER-- **NOT A WORD TO JACKIE ESTACADO.**
...DEAL.
I PROMISED NOT TO SAY A WORD TO JACKIE ESTACADO.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 * 0 #
☠⚡★@ IT.
HEY, **JACKIE?**

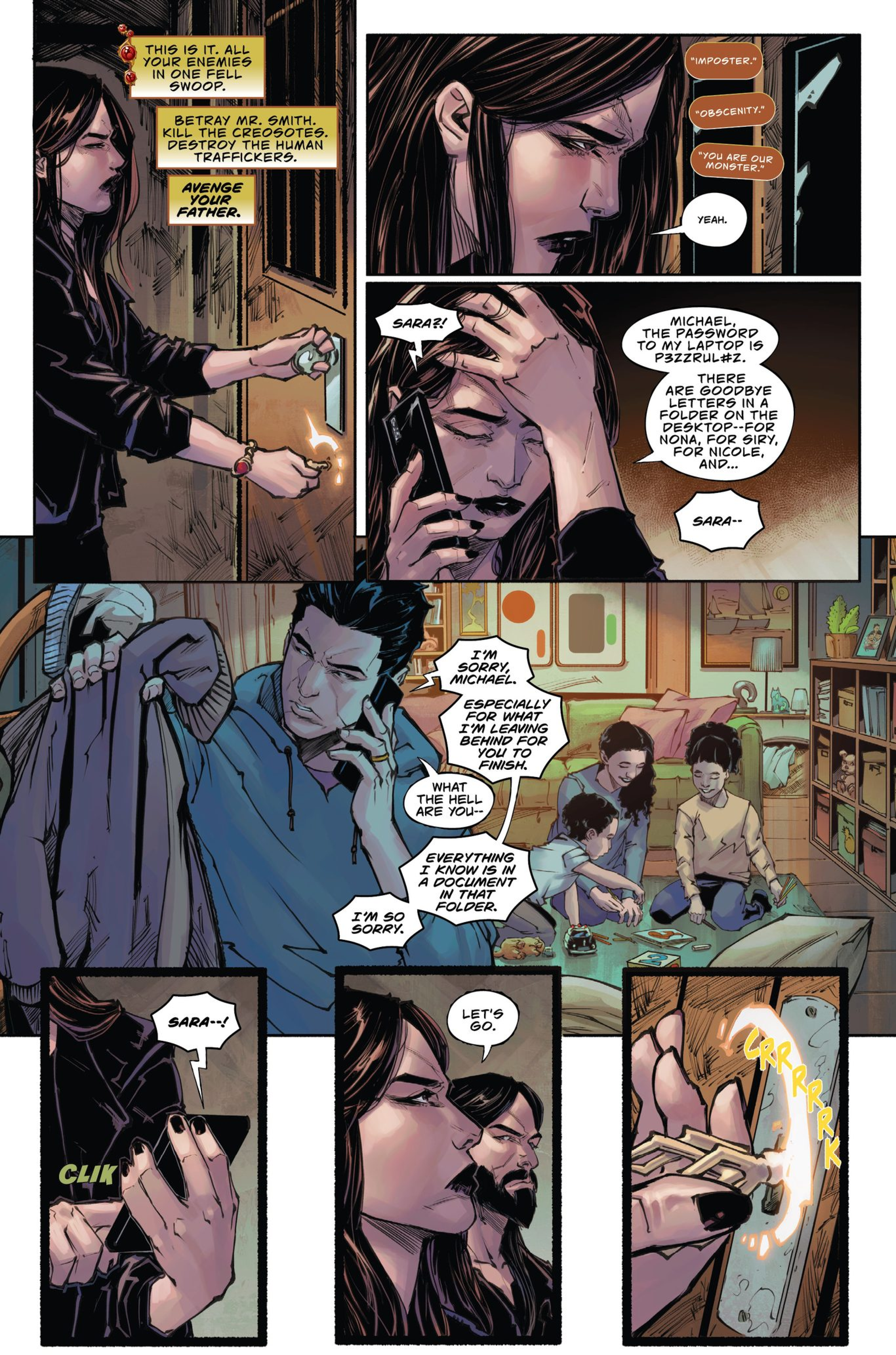

!
THE WITCHBLADE DIDN'T DEFEND ME?!
LET ME GUESS...
YOU SURVIVED **THE EXPLOSION AT MY APARTMENT,** DIDN'T YOU?
AND YOU'VE FOUND A NEW HOST...
VINTER-- KINGPIN OF THE CREOSOTES.
QUITE THE RISK YOU TOOK, COMING TO AN ESTABLISHMENT MY PEOPLE RUN, MEETING WITH OUR ENEMY, AND AGREEING TO KILL US FOR A PRICE.
I THOUGHT YOU FANCIED YOURSELF ***"ONE OF THE GOOD ONES,"*** DETECTIVE PEZZINI.
BUT NOW FOR AN AFTER-DINNER STROLL, YOU'RE GOING TO WALK INTO OUR NEST AND ***MOW US ALL DOWN*** LIKE--?

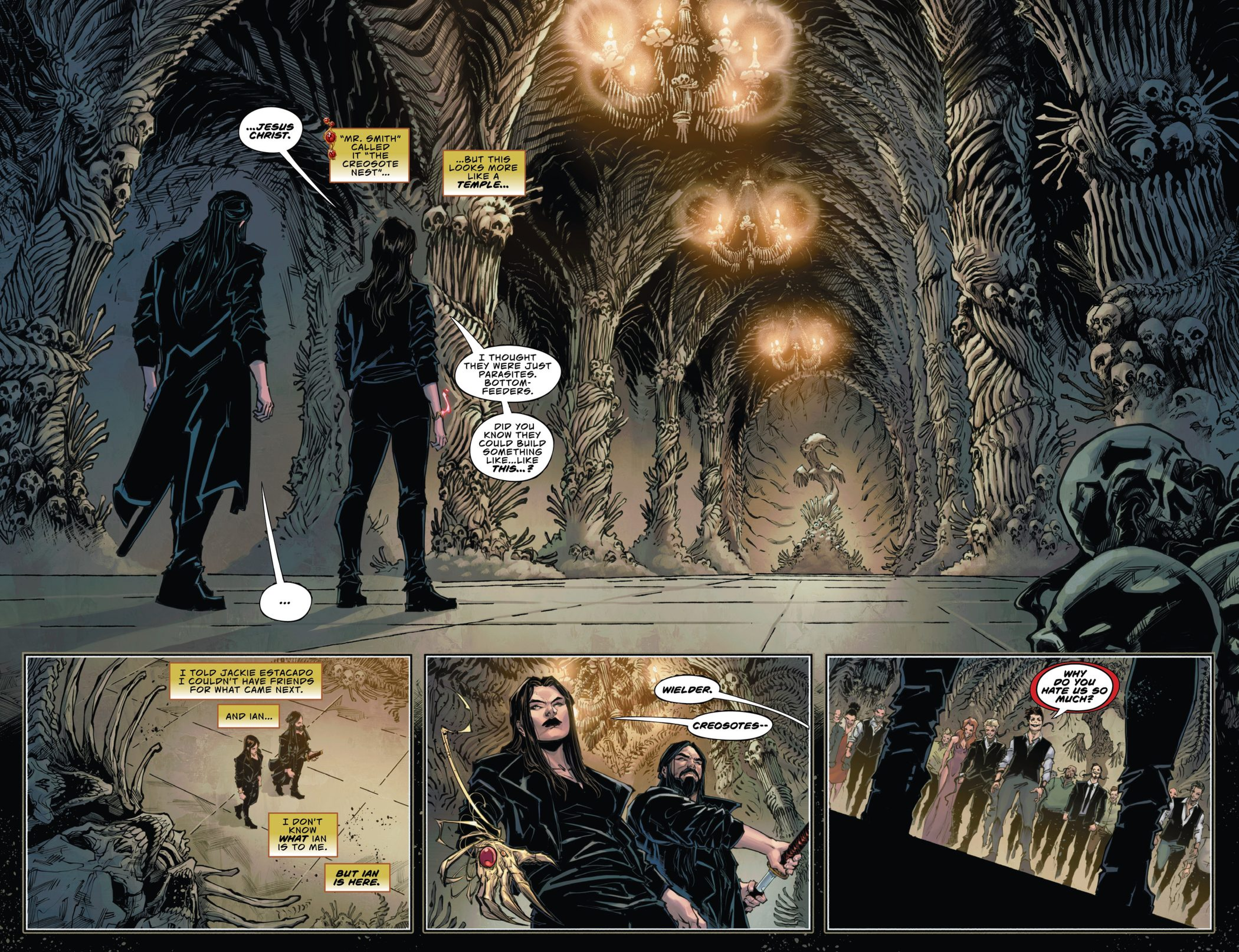

HEY, ***TRAITOR.***
YOU RUNNING SOME ☠$★@-UP GAME BEHIND MY UNCLE'S BACK--?!
JACKIE THINKS VINTER IS THE FRANCHETTI FAMILY RAT!
I KNEW THE BASTARD WOULD BE HERE, BUT NOT WHO HE WAS--
TSSSSSS
AH, ☠$★@, HERE WE GO AGAIN--
THE WITCHBLADE DIDN'T DEFEND ME BECAUSE IT WAS BRACING LIKE A ROTTWEILER ON A CHOKE-CHAIN TO GO AFTER JACKIE ESTACADO--
I PROMISE YOU, BOY, I HAVE PATRONS FAR GRANDER THAN WHATEVER BLOATED MONGREL "UNCLE" YOU POSSESS.
"MR. SMITH" SAID THE CREOSOTES WERE THE HERALDS OF THE DARKNESS...
WHAT THE--?! DUDE'S BLOOD BURNS LIKE ☠$★@ ***ACID!***
SSSSSsss
...BUT THEY DON'T SEEM TO HAVE ANY IDEA ABOUT THE GRUESOME #*✳● SWARMING AROUND JACKIE ESTACADO.
WHY CAN'T THEY SEE WHAT I SEE?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
ACID ATTACK!
ASSASSINATION!

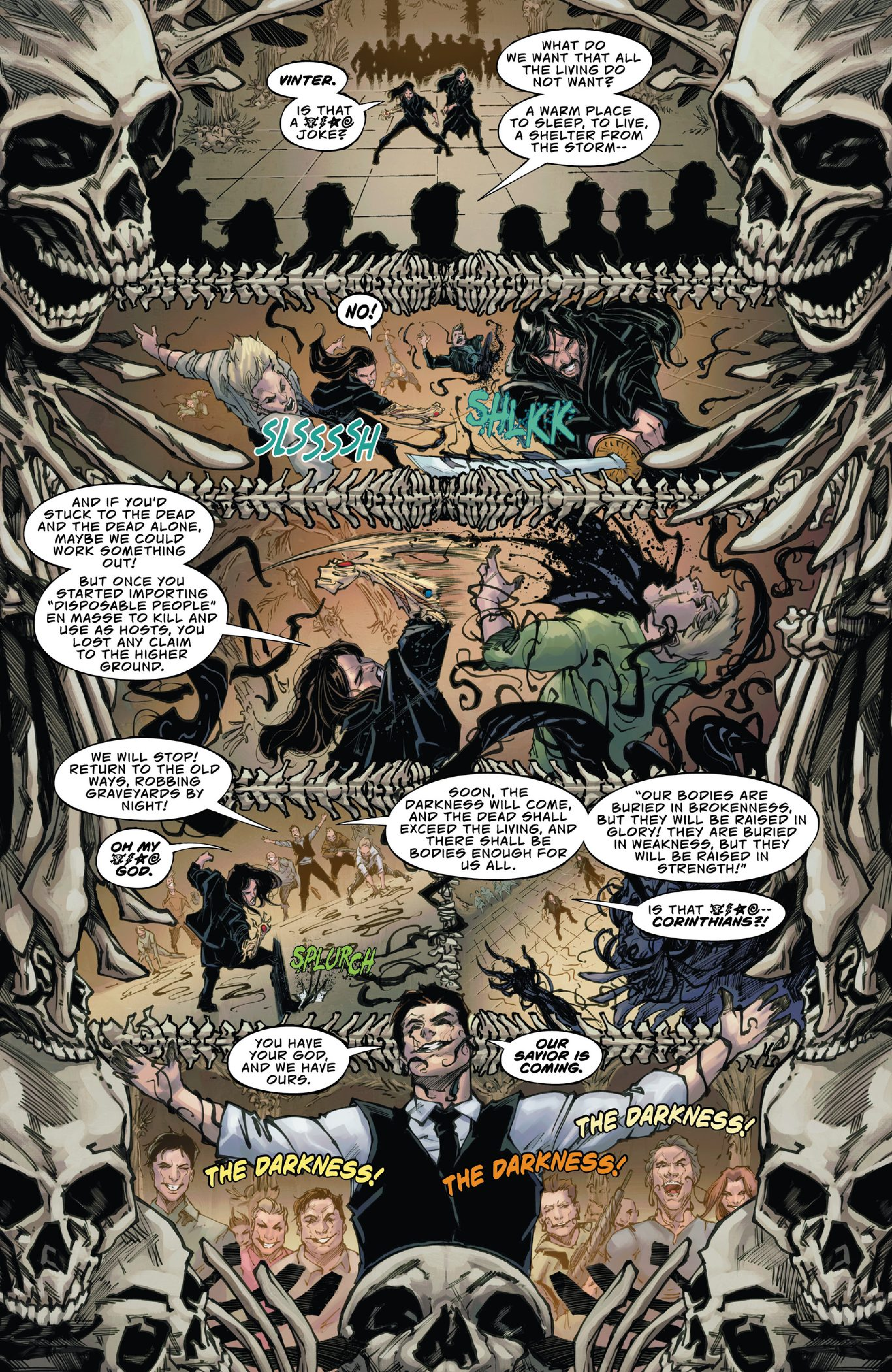

MR.--?
ESTACADO.
FRANCHETTI FAMILY. I SEE.
AND YOU WOULD HELP THIS WOMAN SLAUGHTER US ALL?
☠⚡★@, IT'S GONNA BE HARD TO KEEP THIS KID IN THE DARK ABOUT-- ***WHATEVER'S IN THE DARK.***
YOU REALLY MAKE FRIENDS WHEREVER YOU GO, DON'T YOU?
THIS PRICK BURNED DOWN MY APARTMENT--
--AND HE LEADS THE TRAFFICKERS YOUR "MR. SMITH" GOT THE FRANCHETTIS IN BED WITH.
IAN ONCE ACCUSED ME OF PLAYING HERO BECAUSE IT WAS THE ONLY DEFENSIBLE WAY TO HURT OTHER PEOPLE.
UNNPH!
AND AS JACKIE ESTACADO CURLS HIS FINGERS AROUND THE BRASS KNUCKLES IN HIS POCKET, I WONDER...
AH!
IF ***A HERO*** IS ALLOWED TO BREAK A HUMAN BEING'S SKULL IN THE NAME OF JUSTICE--

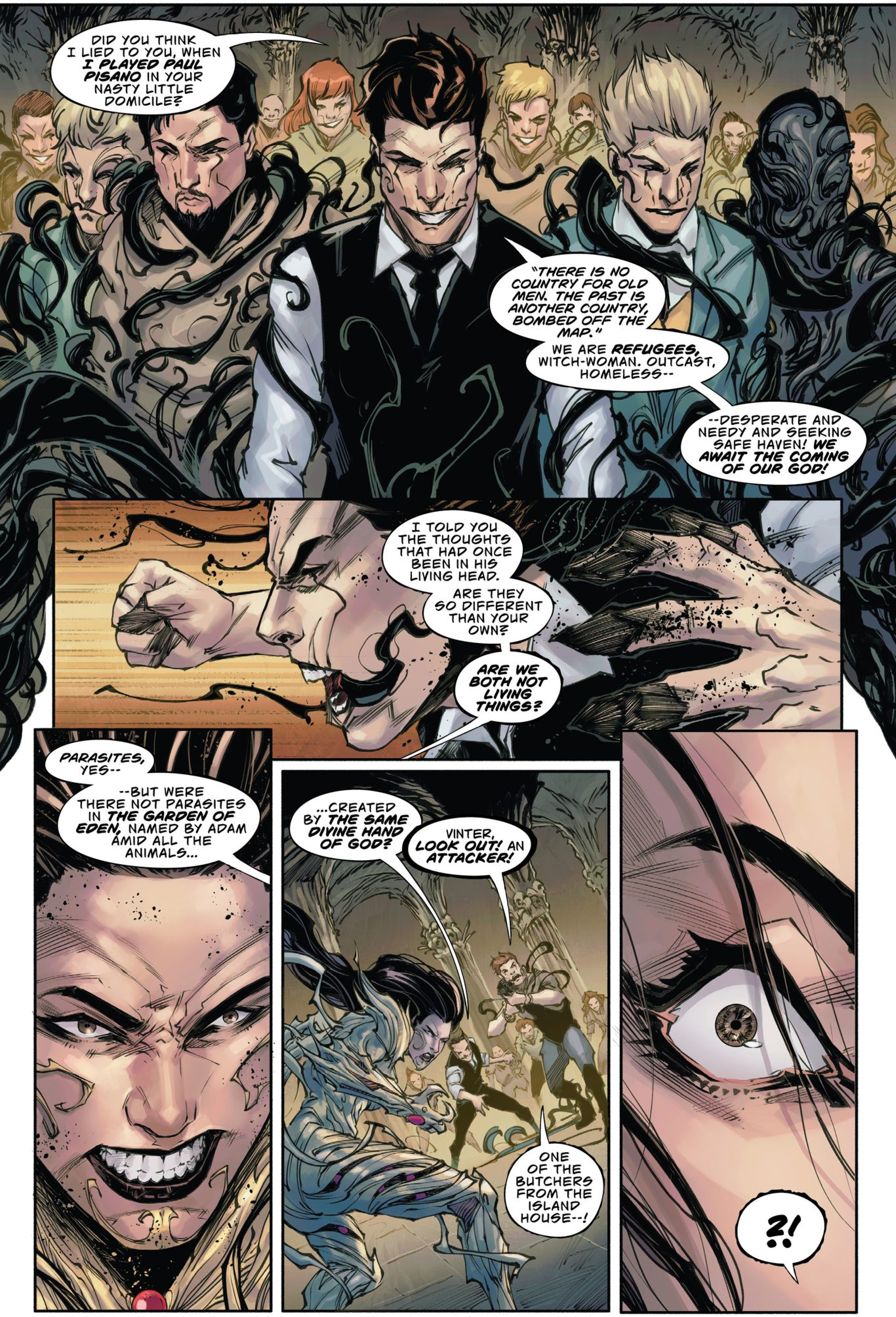

WHAT'S AN ANTI-HERO ALLOWED TO DO?
SHLNK
BLAM BLAM BLAM
--COOK THAT SMIRK RIGHT OFF OF YOU, PRETTY BOY--!
SSSSZZZZ
SSHHTTTHNK
KRSSSSH
SSHHNK
KRAKK
UGH, WHY WERE THOSE GUYS SO OILY--?!
#£*💣.
SIRY IS GONNA SKIN ME FOR MITTENS AFTER THIS.
VINTER HAS TO RUN BACK TO THE CREOSOTE NEST TO WARN HIS PARASITES.
BUT I HAVE THE SHORTCUT.

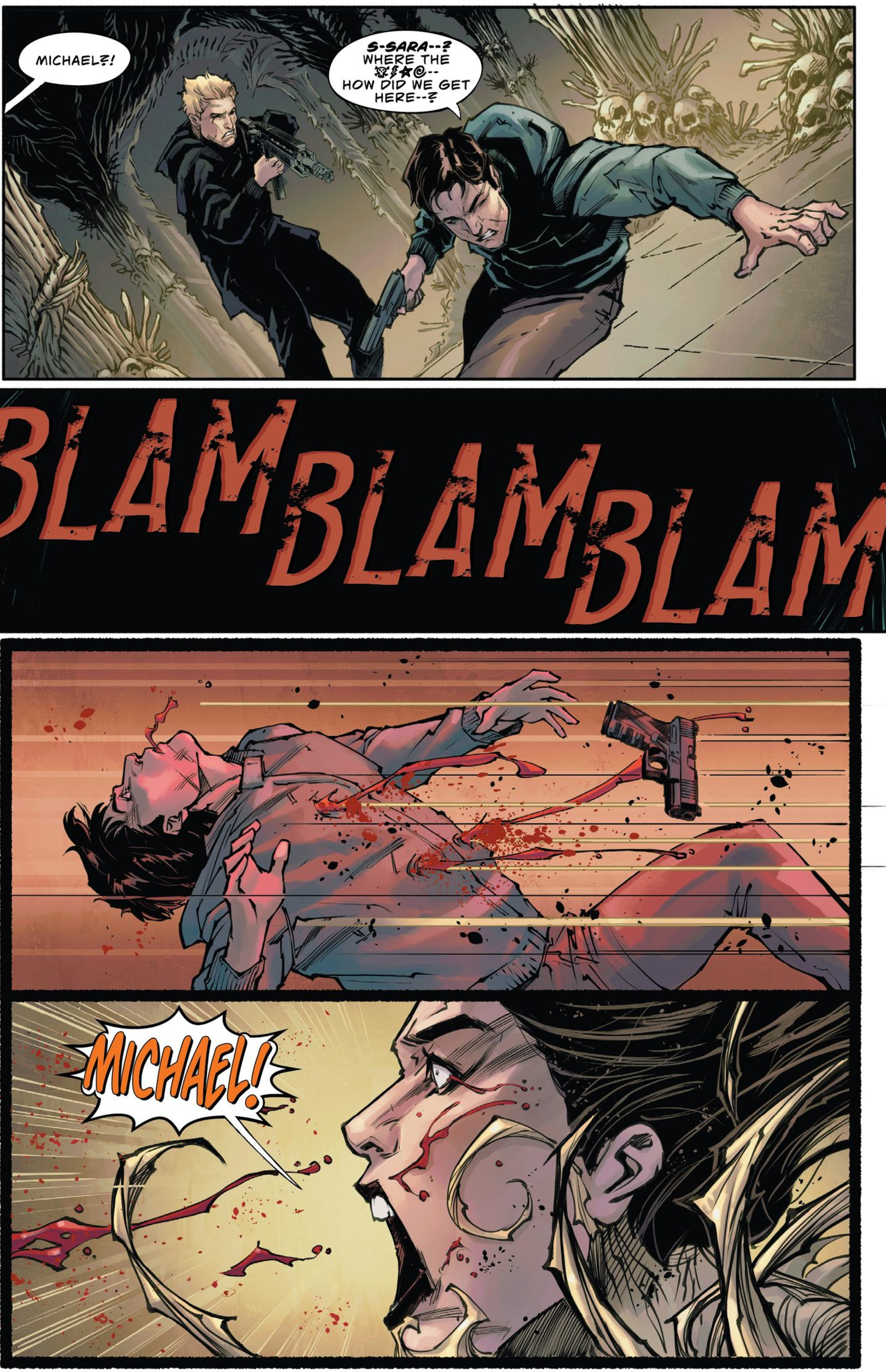

FIRST DATE, YOU TRY TO WHIP MY ASS.
SECOND DATE, YOU BURN DOWN A MICHELIN-STAR RESTAURANT TO SAVE IT.
YOU GOTTA RELAX-- *ASMR* AND AN OLD-FASHIONED ORGASM OR SOMETHING.
YOUR ANIME BOYFRIEND HAS THE TIMING OF AARON ☠⚡★@ JUDGE.
WHAT? NO SMART COMEBACK?
NOT GOING TO BEAT A DOG FOR BARKING.
ESPECIALLY ***THE RUNT OF THE LITTER.***
THIS DOESN'T MAKE US ***FRIENDS,*** PEZZINI, BUT--
I CAN'T HAVE FRIENDS WITH WHAT I'M ABOUT TO DO.
RUN, KID.
WE'LL BE ENEMIES AGAIN IN THE MORNING.
THE KEY TO THE CREOSOTE NEST...
THIS IS A TRAP, RIGHT? THIS IS PAUL PISANO 2.0.
I'LL GO LOCK THE OTHER DOORS.

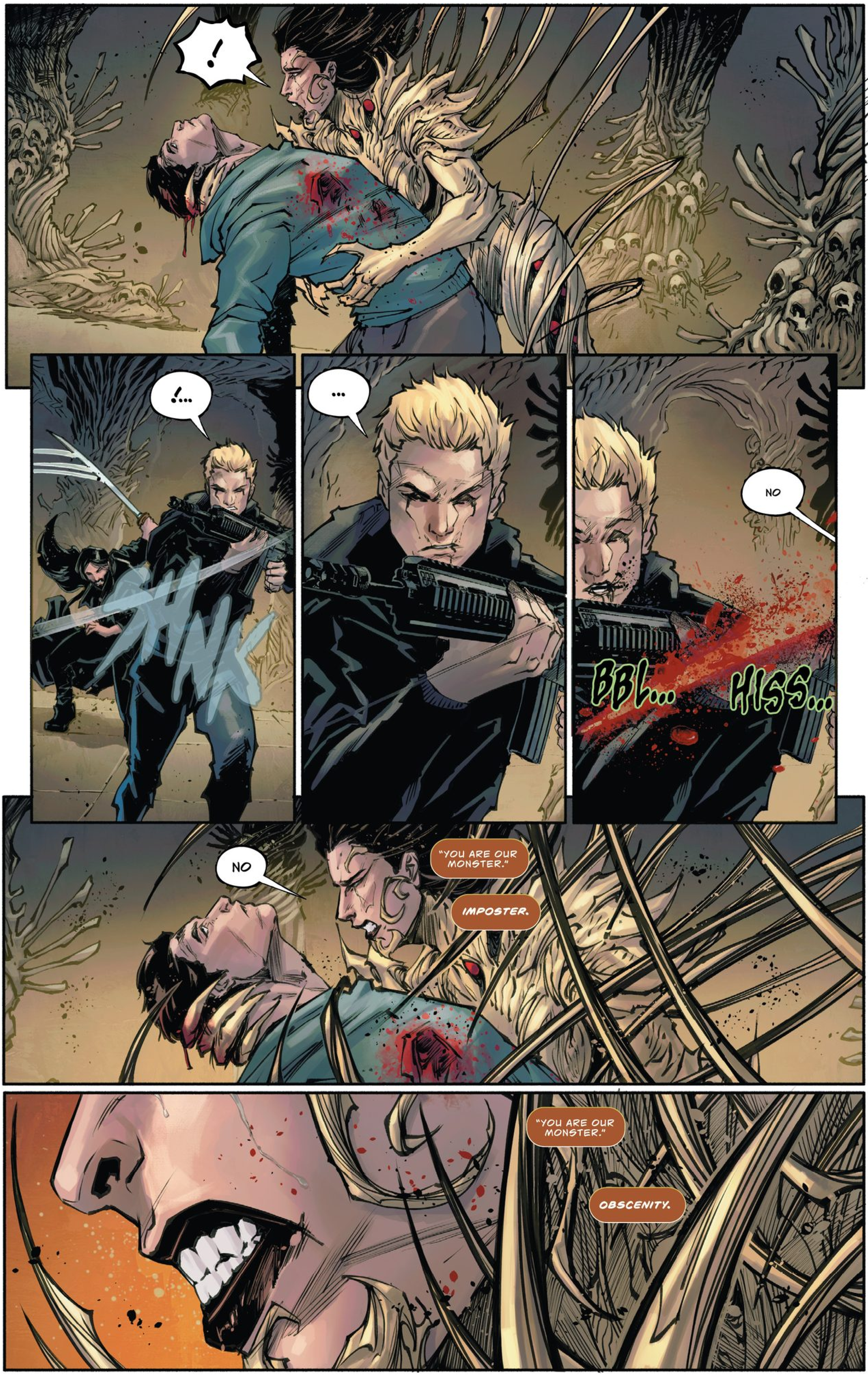

THIS IS IT. ALL YOUR ENEMIES IN ONE FELL SWOOP.
BETRAY MR. SMITH. KILL THE CREOSOTES. DESTROY THE HUMAN TRAFFICKERS.
AVENGE YOUR FATHER.
"IMPOSTER."
"OBSCENITY."
"YOU ARE OUR MONSTER."
YEAH.
SARA?!
MICHAEL, THE PASSWORD TO MY LAPTOP IS P3ZZRUL#Z.
THERE ARE GOODBYE LETTERS IN A FOLDER ON THE DESKTOP--FOR NONA, FOR SIRY, FOR NICOLE, AND...
SARA--
I'M SORRY, MICHAEL.
ESPECIALLY FOR WHAT I'M LEAVING BEHIND FOR YOU TO FINISH.
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU--
EVERYTHING I KNOW IS IN A DOCUMENT IN THAT FOLDER.
I'M SO SORRY.
SARA--!
CLIK
LET'S GO.
GRRRRRK

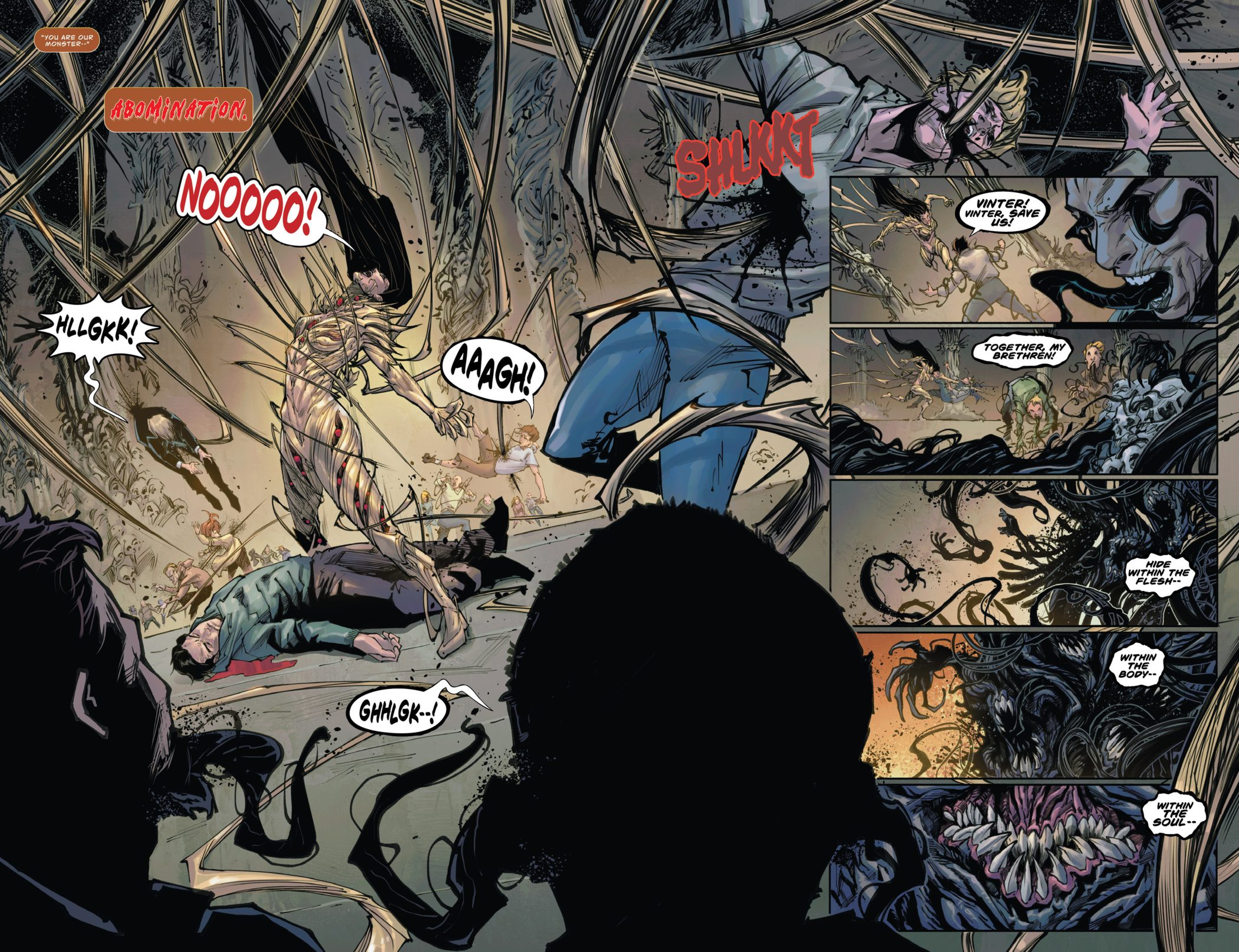

...JESUS CHRIST.
"MR. SMITH" CALLED IT "THE CREOSOTE NEST"...
...BUT THIS LOOKS MORE LIKE A *TEMPLE*...
I THOUGHT THEY WERE JUST PARASITES. BOTTOM-FEEDERS.
DID YOU KNOW THEY COULD BUILD SOMETHING LIKE...LIKE *THIS...?*
...
I TOLD JACKIE ESTACADO I COULDN'T HAVE FRIENDS FOR WHAT CAME NEXT.
AND IAN...
I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* IAN IS TO ME.
BUT IAN IS HERE.
WIELDER.
CREOSOTES--
WHY DO YOU HATE US SO MUCH?

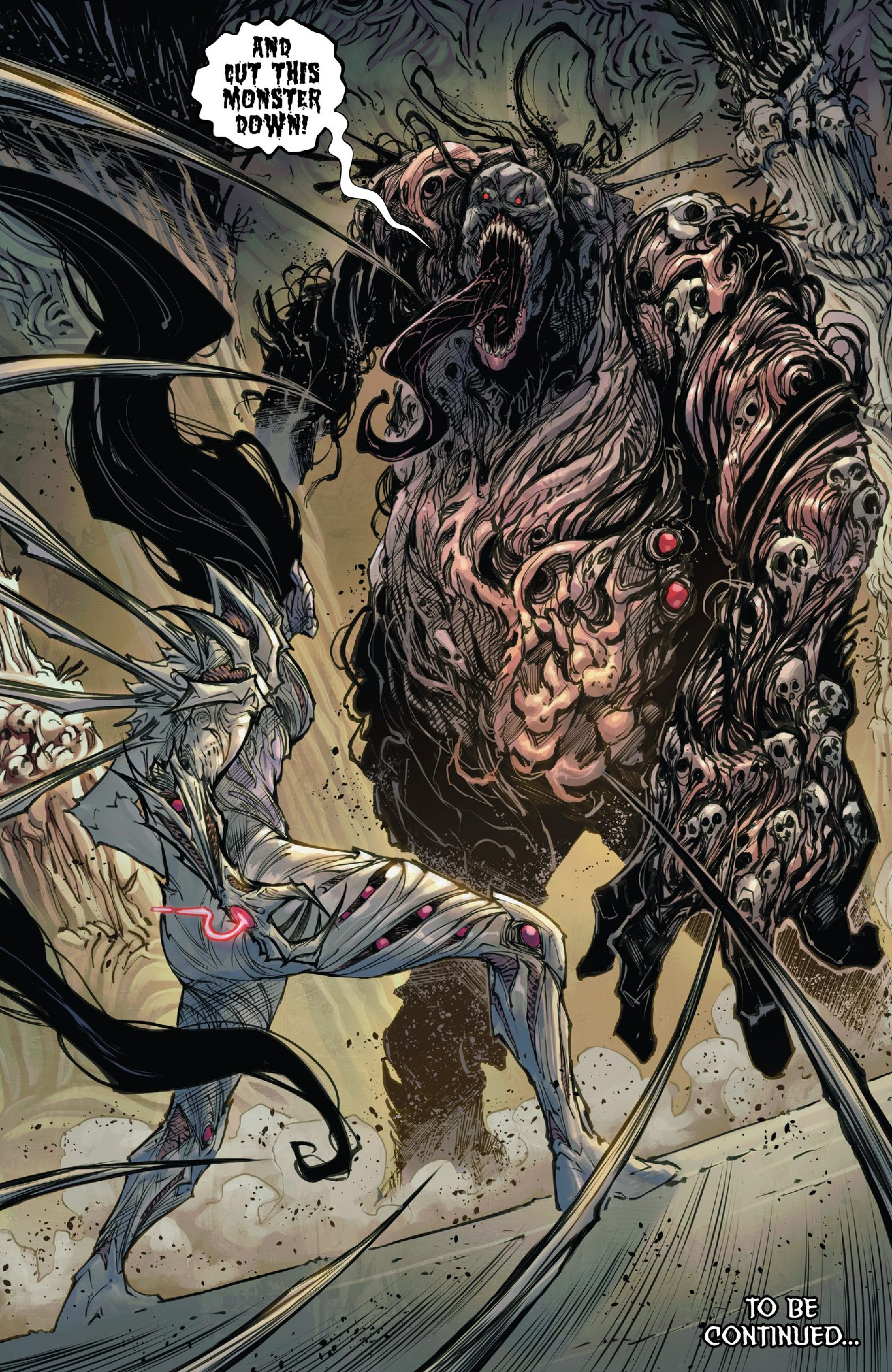

VINTER.
IS THAT A ☠⚡★@ JOKE?
WHAT DO WE WANT THAT ALL THE LIVING DO NOT WANT?
A WARM PLACE TO SLEEP, TO LIVE, A SHELTER FROM THE STORM--
NO!
SLSSSSH
SHLKK
AND IF YOU'D STUCK TO THE DEAD AND THE DEAD ALONE, MAYBE WE COULD WORK SOMETHING OUT!
BUT ONCE YOU STARTED IMPORTING "DISPOSABLE PEOPLE" EN MASSE TO KILL AND USE AS HOSTS, YOU LOST ANY CLAIM TO THE HIGHER GROUND.
WE WILL STOP! RETURN TO THE OLD WAYS, ROBBING GRAVEYARDS BY NIGHT!
OH MY ☠⚡★@ GOD.
SOON, THE DARKNESS WILL COME, AND THE DEAD SHALL EXCEED THE LIVING, AND THERE SHALL BE BODIES ENOUGH FOR US ALL.
"OUR BODIES ARE BURIED IN BROKENNESS, BUT THEY WILL BE RAISED IN GLORY! THEY ARE BURIED IN WEAKNESS, BUT THEY WILL BE RAISED IN STRENGTH!"
IS THAT ☠⚡★@-- CORINTHIANS?!
SPLURCH
YOU HAVE YOUR GOD, AND WE HAVE OURS.
OUR SAVIOR IS COMING.
THE DARKNESS!
THE DARKNESS!
THE DARKNESS!


DID YOU THINK I LIED TO YOU, WHEN **I PLAYED PAUL PISANO** IN YOUR NASTY LITTLE DOMICILE?
"THERE IS NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN. THE PAST IS ANOTHER COUNTRY, BOMBED OFF THE MAP."
WE ARE ***REFUGEES,*** WITCH-WOMAN. OUTCAST, HOMELESS--
--DESPERATE AND NEEDY AND SEEKING SAFE HAVEN! ***WE AWAIT THE COMING OF OUR GOD!***
I TOLD YOU THE THOUGHTS THAT HAD ONCE BEEN IN HIS LIVING HEAD.
ARE THEY SO DIFFERENT THAN YOUR OWN?
ARE WE BOTH NOT LIVING THINGS?
PARASITES, YES--
--BUT WERE THERE NOT PARASITES IN ***THE GARDEN OF EDEN,*** NAMED BY ADAM AMID ALL THE ANIMALS...
...CREATED BY ***THE SAME DIVINE HAND OF GOD?***
VINTER, ***LOOK OUT!*** AN ***ATTACKER!***
ONE OF THE BUTCHERS FROM THE ISLAND HOUSE--!
?!


MICHAEL⁈!
S-SARA--? WHERE THE ☠⚡★@-- HOW DID WE GET HERE--?
BLAM BLAM BLAM
MICHAEL!


!
!...
SHANK
...
NO
BBL... HISS...
NO
"YOU ARE OUR MONSTER."
IMPOSTER.
"YOU ARE OUR MONSTER."
OBSCENITY.

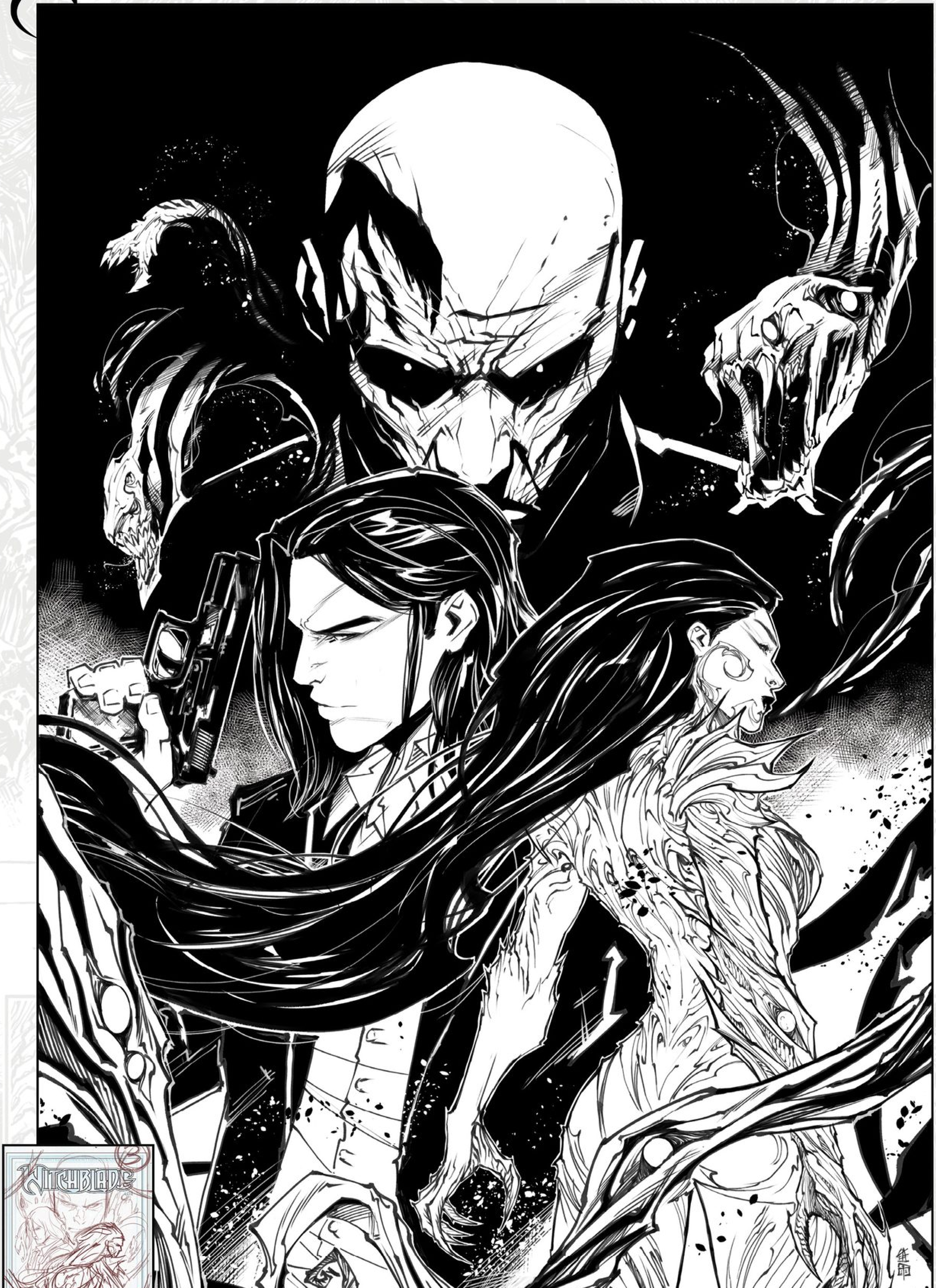

"YOU ARE OUR MONSTER--"
ABOMINATION.
NOOOOO!
HLLGKK!
AAAGH!
GHHLGK--!
SHLKKT
VINTER! VINTER, SAVE US!
TOGETHER, MY BRETHREN!
HIDE WITHIN THE FLESH--
WITHIN THE BODY--
WITHIN THE SOUL--


AND CUT THIS MONSTER DOWN!
TO BE CONTINUED...

NEXT ISSUE!

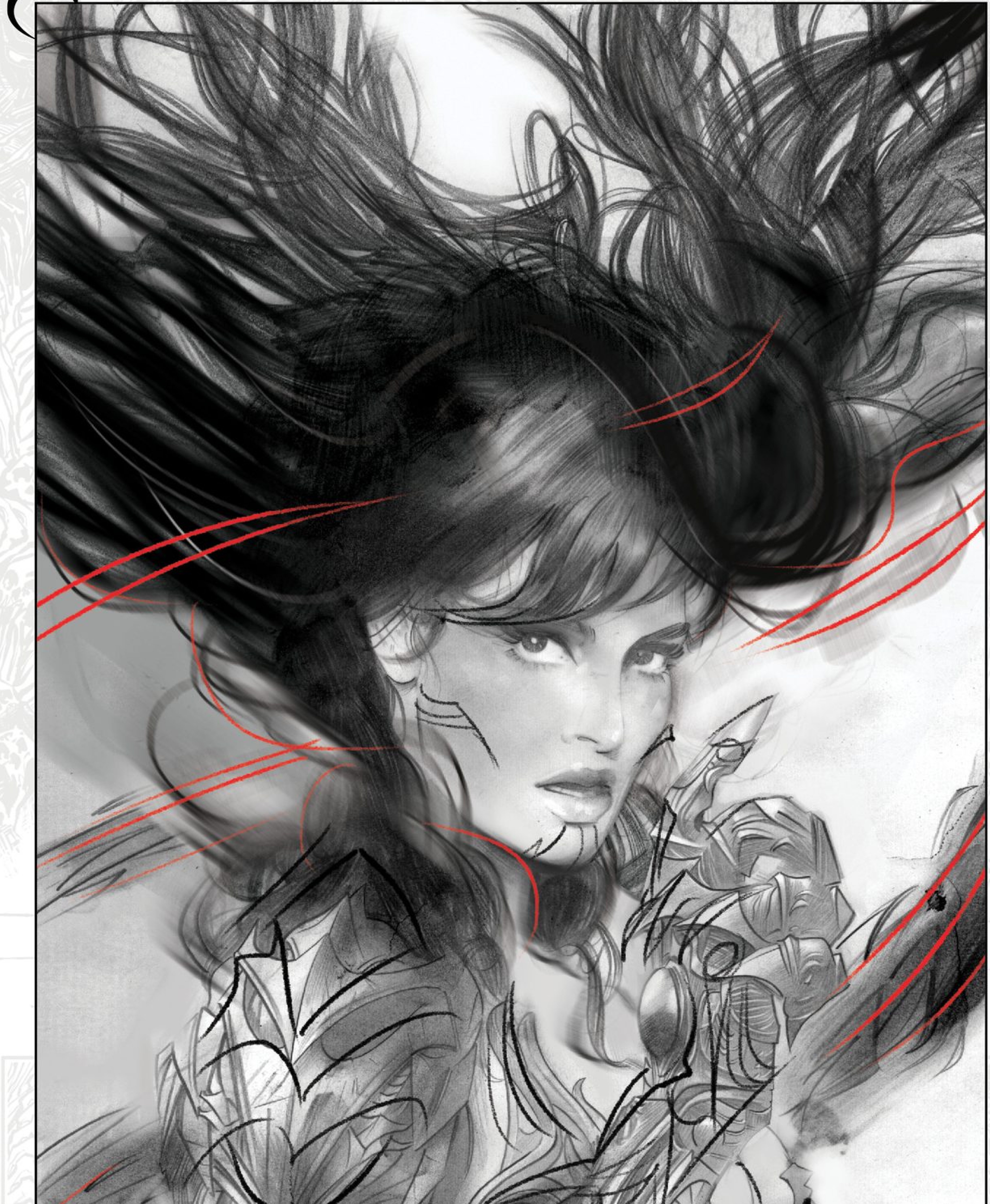
“HE'S GOT THE WHOLE WORLD IN HIS HANDS”

Witchblade #10 Gallery • Cover A Process



Witchblade #10, Cover A, process from thumbnail, line art to colors
Art by **Giuseppe Cafaro** and **Arif Prianto**

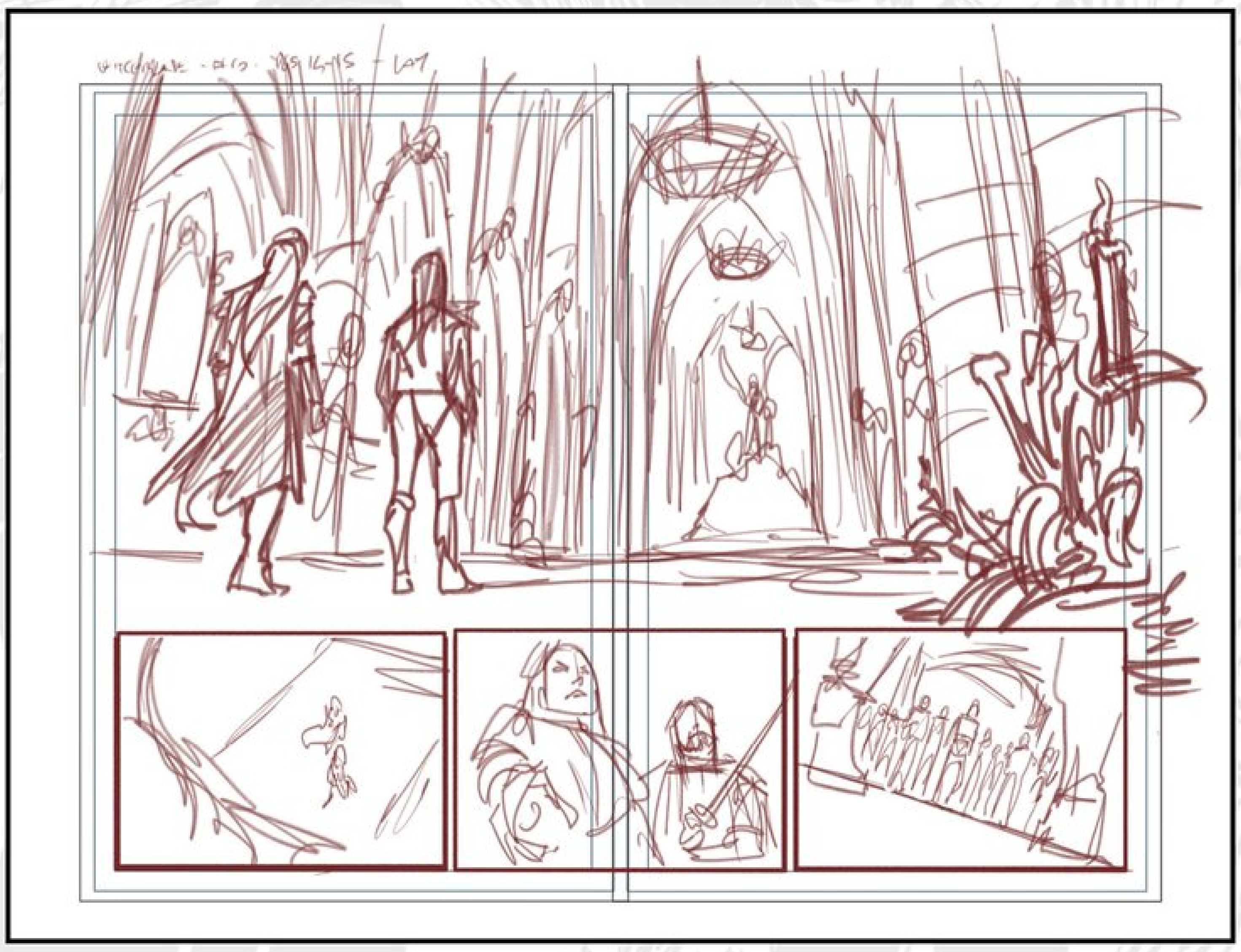
WITCHBLADE #10 Gallery • Cover B Process

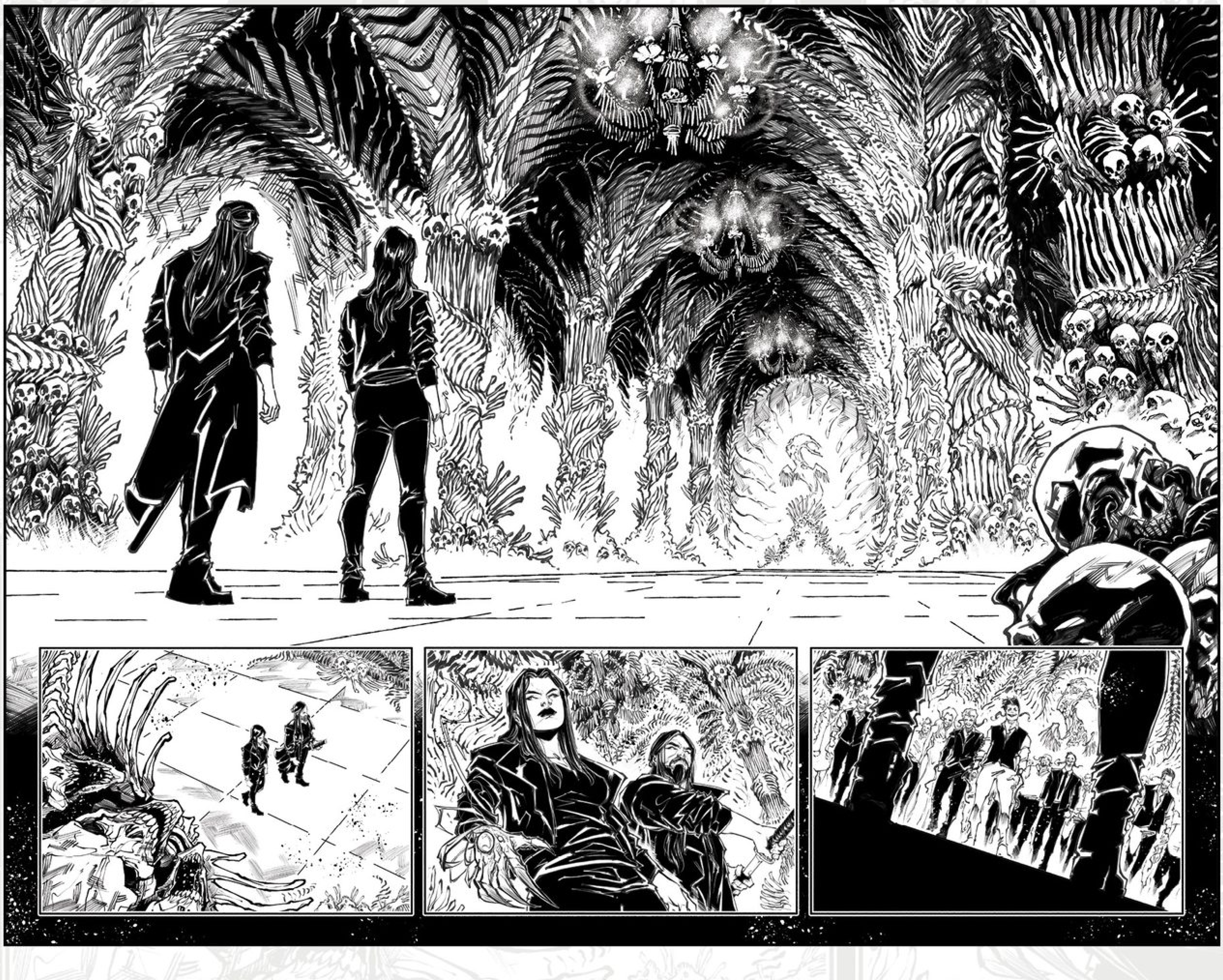


Witchblade #10, Cover B, process from thumbnail, line art to colors
Art by **Tula Lotay**

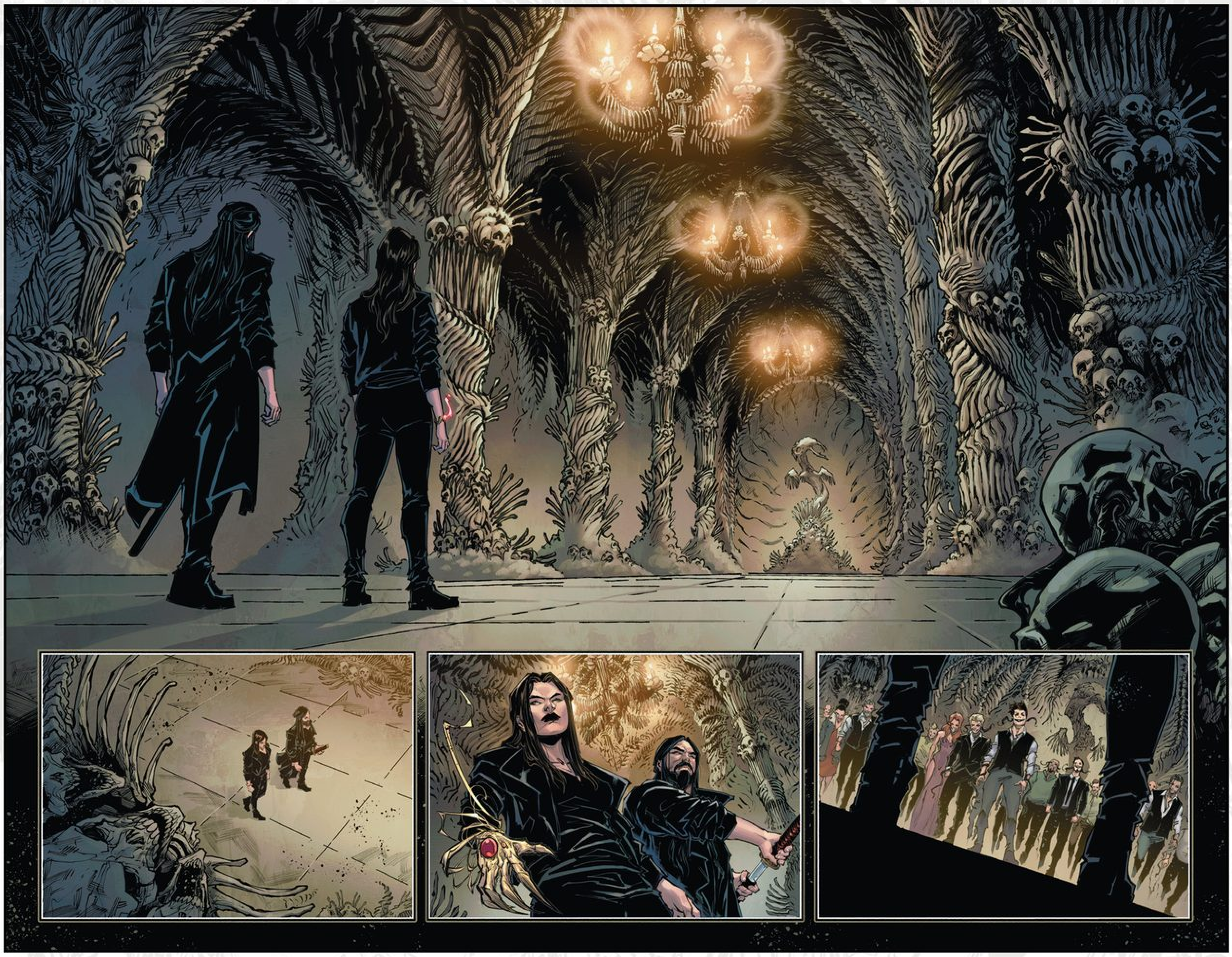
WITCHBLADE®

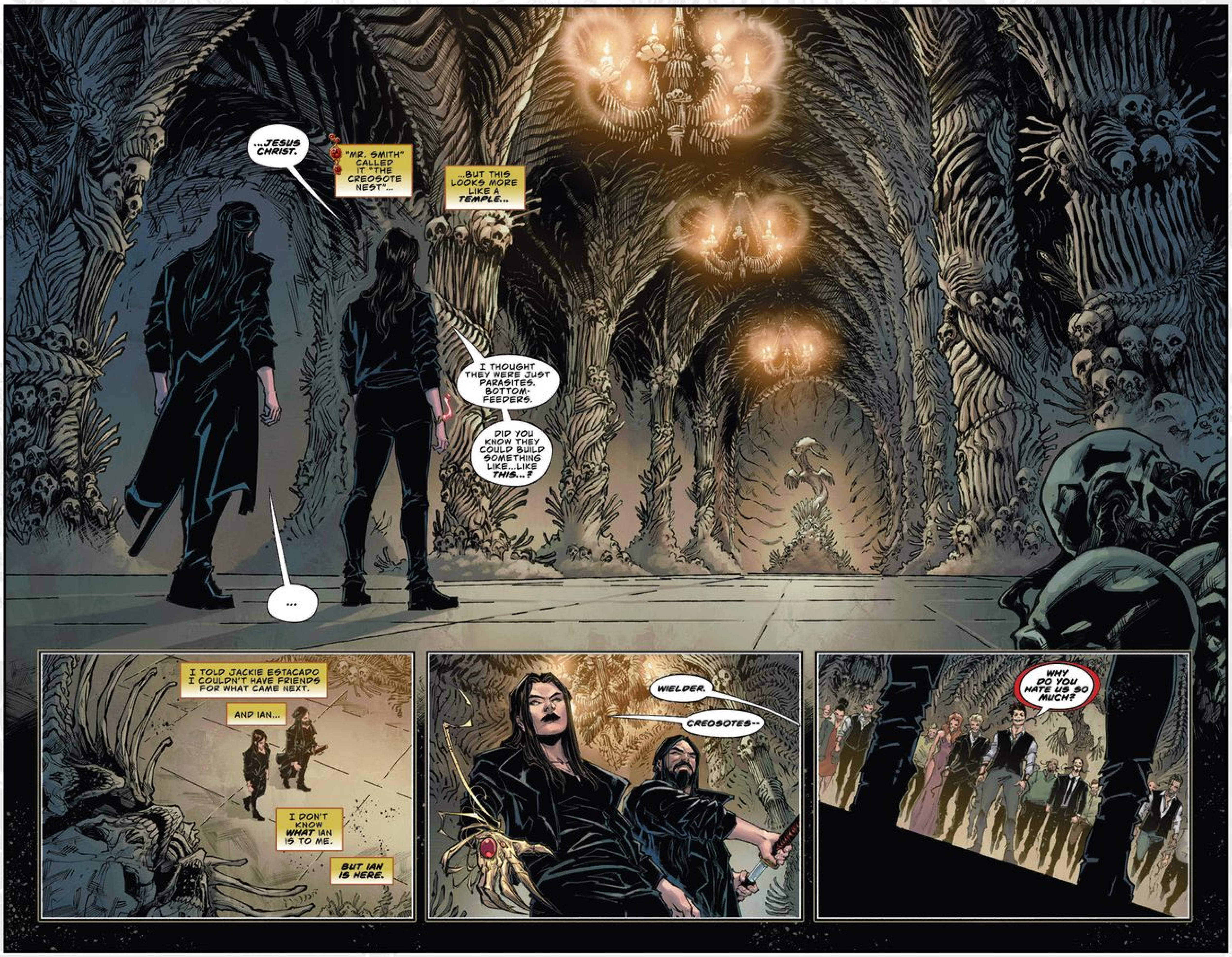
#10 Gallery • Page Process





Witchblade #10, pages 14-15, process from thumbnails, line art, colors to letters

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WIELDER.
CREOSOTES--
WHY DO YOU HATE US SO MUCH?

Creative Team

Marguerite Bennett is a GLAAD-nominated, *New York Times*-bestselling comic book writer based in Los Angeles.

Her credits include DC Comics' *Bombshells, Batwoman* and *RWBY*, along with *Animosity*, *Horde*, and *Insexts* through Aftershock Comics, and *MOTHER OF MADNESS* with *Game of Thrones* superstar Emilia Clarke for Image Comics. She has written *Mighty Morphin Power Ranger*s for Boom Studios, *Josie and the Pussycats* through Archie, *A-Force* and *Years of Future Past* at Marvel, *Red Sonja* and *Sheena* from Dynamite, and the indie horror darling *The Lot* for Bad Idea.

She is the lead writer of *Ark: The Animated Serie*s from Studio Wildcard.

Giuseppe Cafaro is an Italian artist who is based in Caserta, Italy. He started his professional career with the Italian publisher GGStudio, and right after, in 2012, he started to work for Aspen Comics on books like *Soulfire, Fathom: Kiani* and *Trish out of Water*, and Zenescope Entertainment as a cover artist for several years.

He worked over the last 10 years with other publishers, like DC Comics, on *Suicide Squad* and *Catwoman*, and Dynamite Entertainment, on *Red Sonja* and *Vampirella*. He also worked on graphic novels for Boom Studios based on the *Power Rangers* franchise.

In 2021, he collaborated with Tim Seeley and Steve Orlando on *LOADED BIBLE* for Image Comics. Also, he worked on some short stories for Heavy Metal with Blake Northcott and with Phil Smith for the book *Brik Jones: Attorney for Earth*, for his publisher Fighting Lion Comics.

Arif Prianto followed his dreams of working in comics and began his career as a professional colorist in 2007. Since then he has worked on titles from Top Cow Productions, Inc on *WITCHBLADE, THE DARKNESS*, for DC on *Batman & The Joker, Dark Knights of Steel,* and for Marvel on *Venom* and *Spider Woman*. He says that coloring comics is "the best job ever!"

Troy Peteri has been lettering comics for over 20 years and has worked for most publishers you've heard of, and plenty you haven't. He's lettered everything from *The Avengers, Iron Man, Wolverine,* and *Amazing Spider-Man* to more recent titles such as *WITCHBLADE*, *Shazam*, and his all-time favorite gig, *Batman & Joker: The Deadly Duo*.

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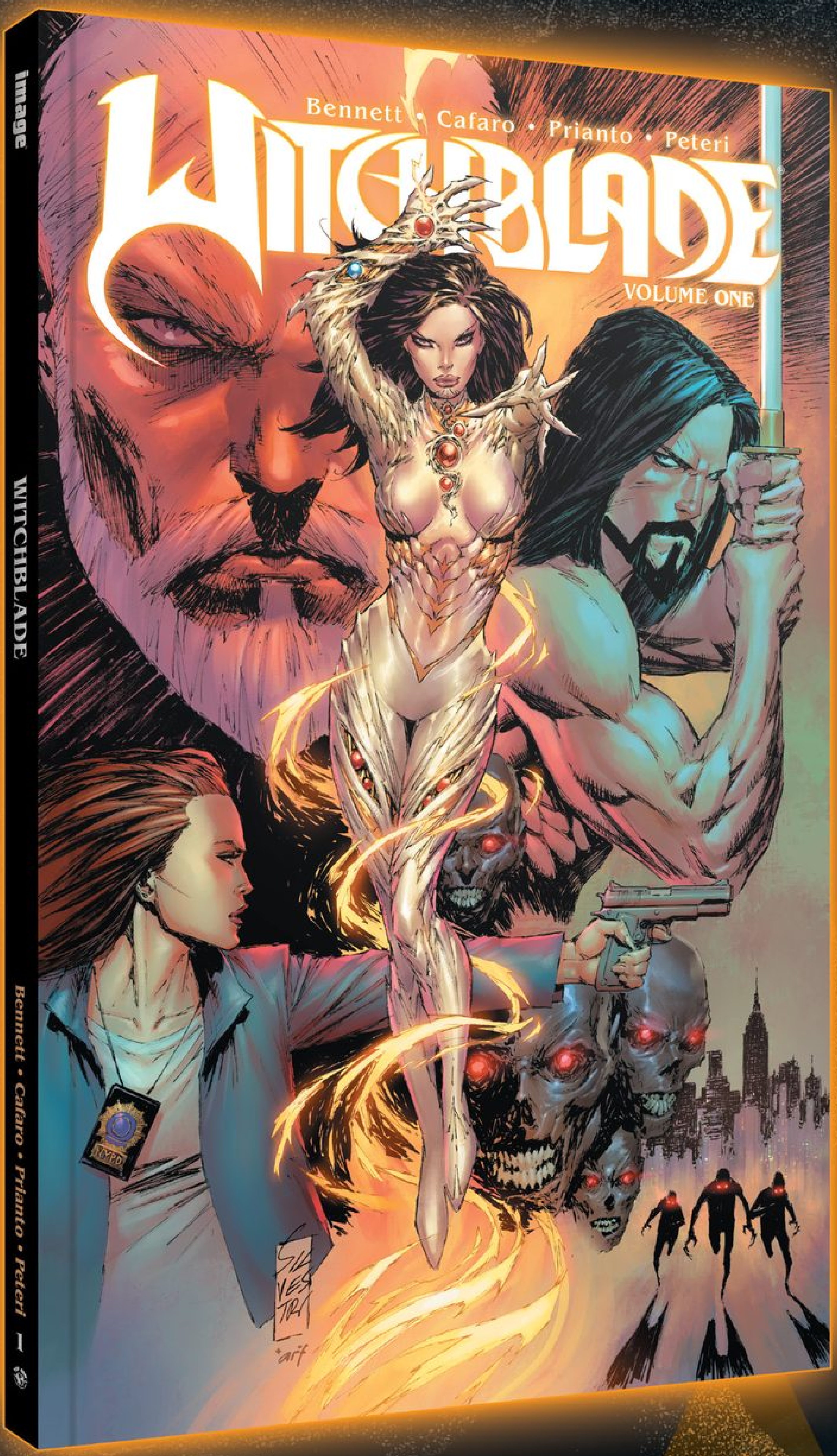
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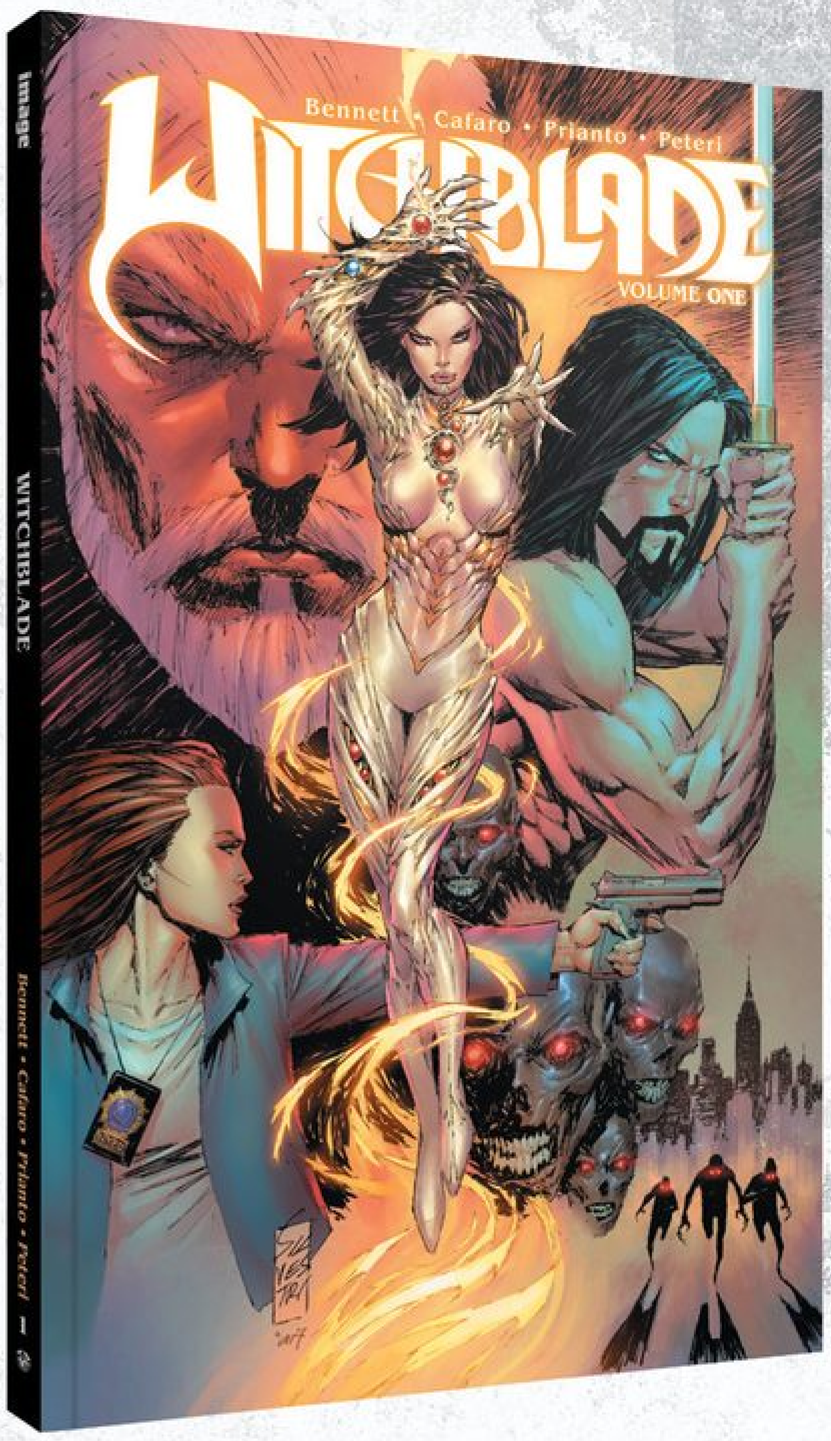
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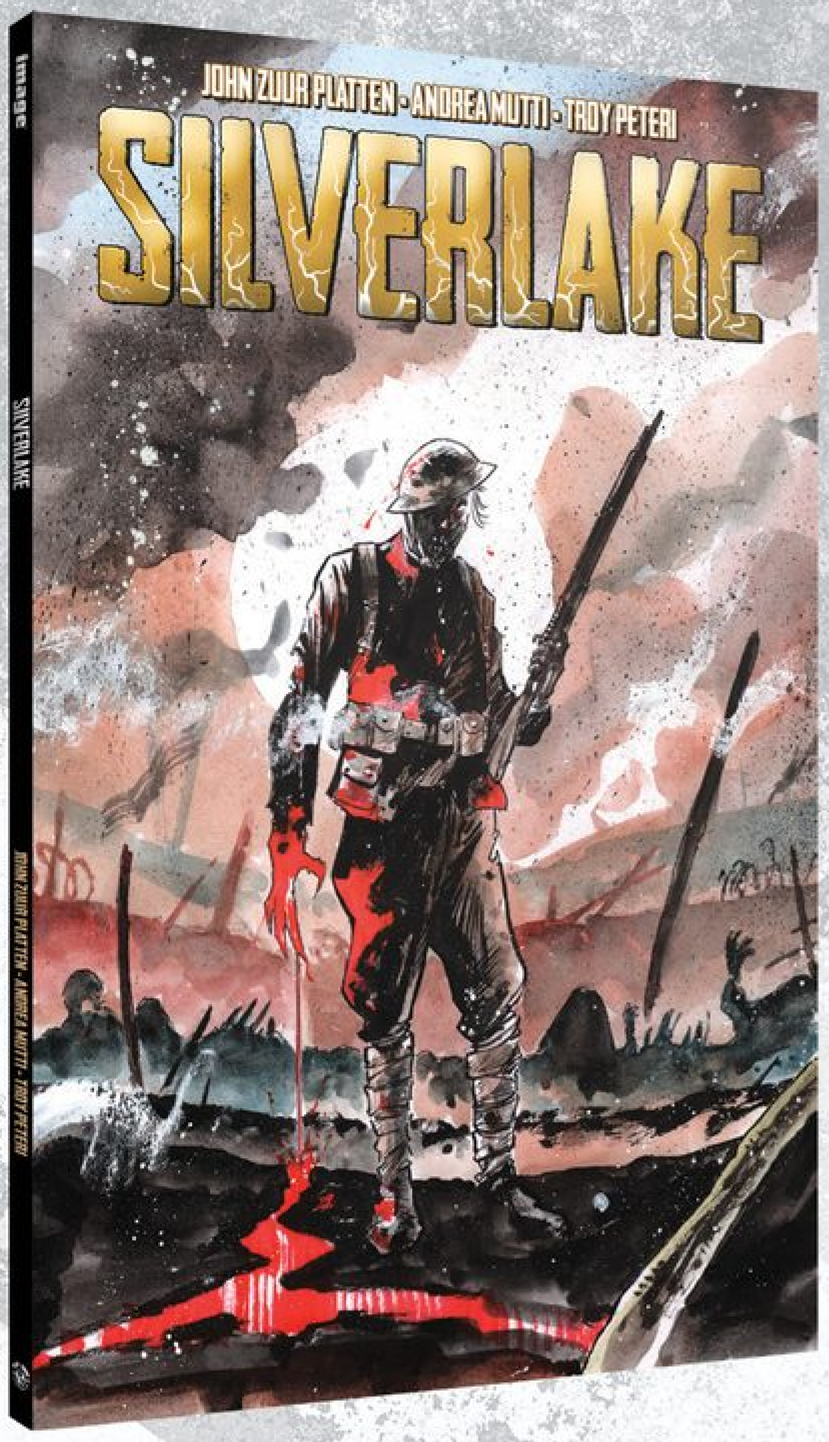
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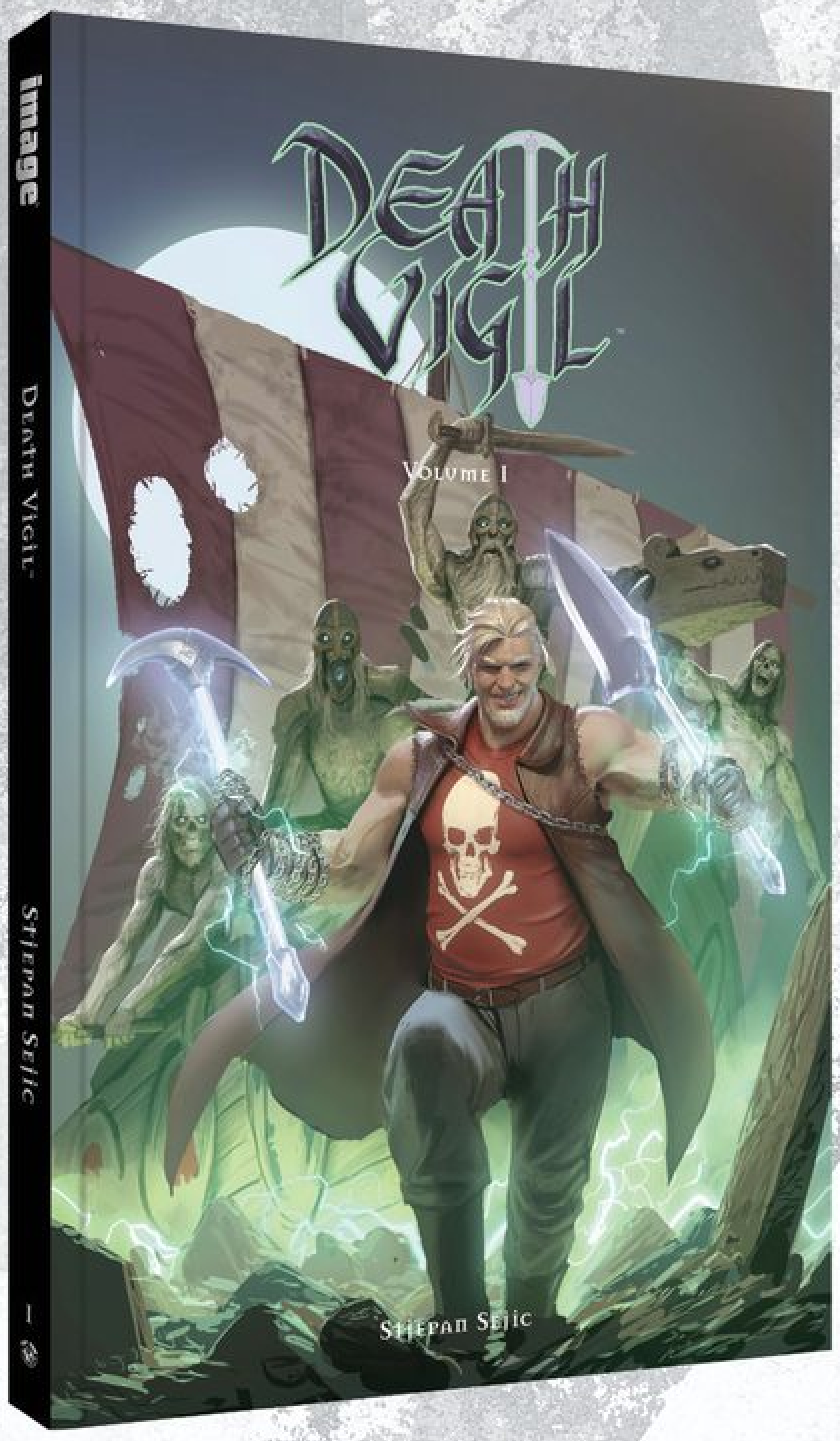
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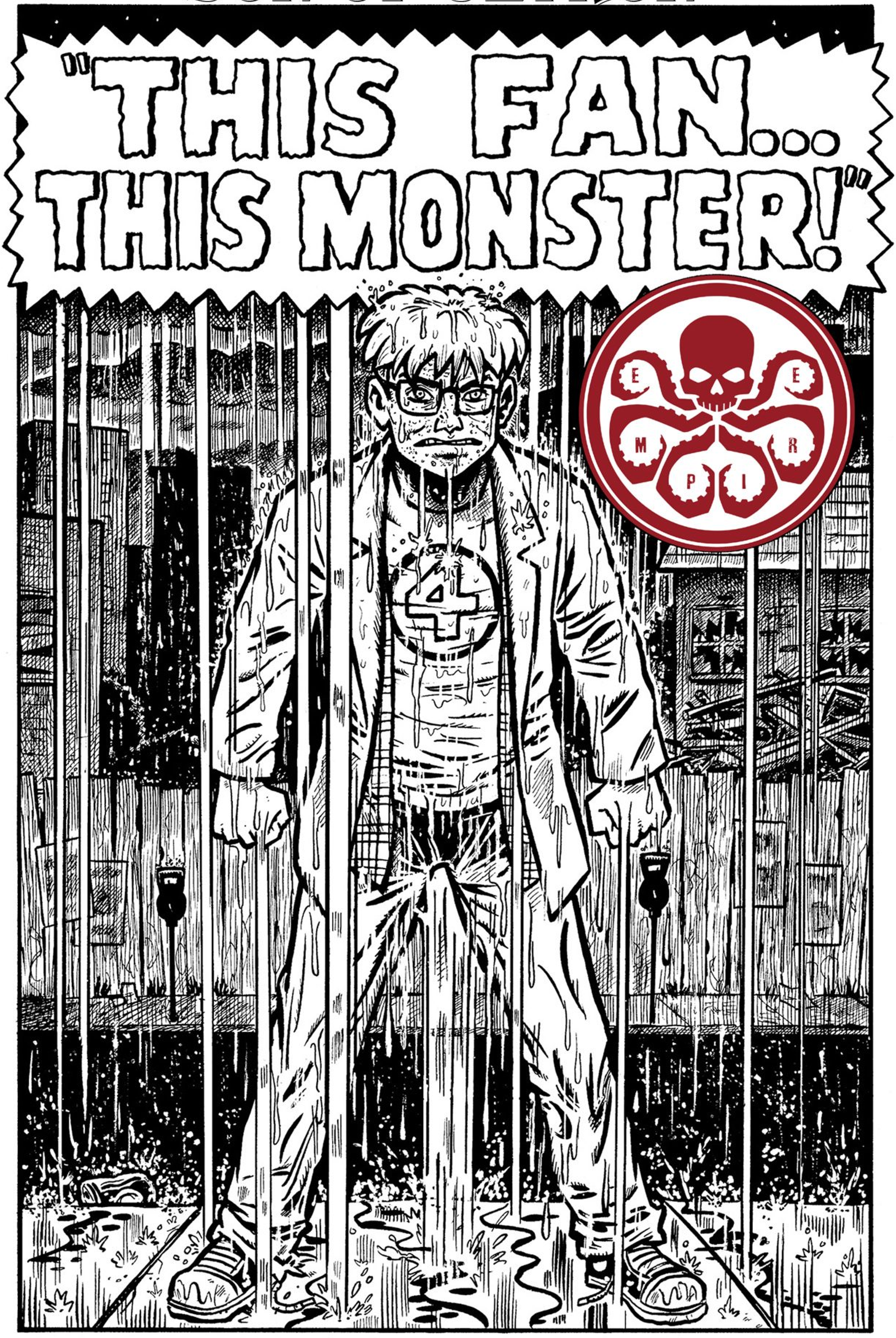
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